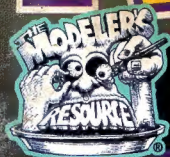
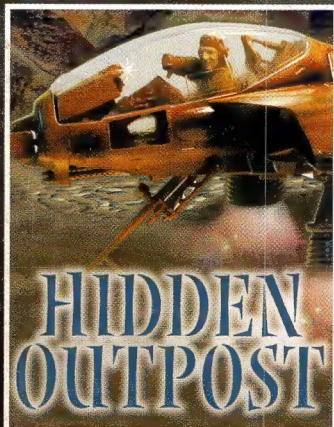


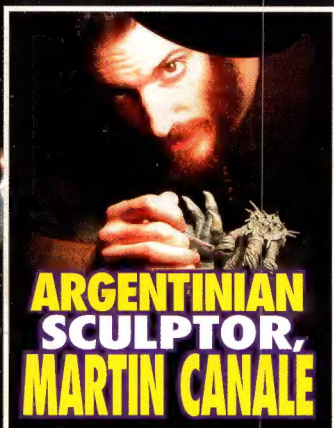
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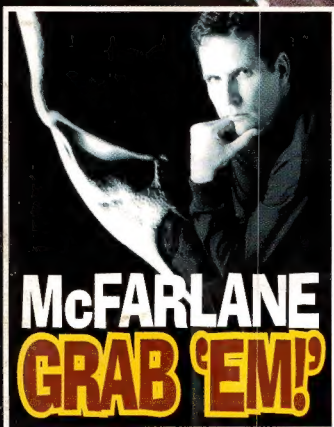
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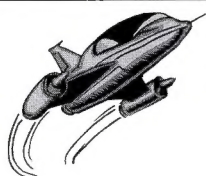
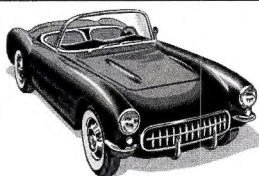
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Issue #48

Founder & Executive Publisher
Fred DeRuvo

Managing Editor
Silvia DeRuvo

Owned & Published by:
Adroit Publications, Inc.

For Advertising Information:
Creative Concepts & Design
Tel: 559.291.2145

Subscriptions
Tel: 916.784.9517

Credit Card Orders:
1.877.624.6633 (877 not 800)
or Fax: 916.784.8384

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Modeler's Resource magazine is published bimonthly, during or just before the first week of Jan, Mar, May, July, Sept & Nov by Adroit Publications, Inc.; Cover price: \$5.99/USA-\$9.99/Canada.

Editorial Address:

4120 Douglas Blvd, #306-372, Granite Bay, CA 95746-5936 modres@surewest.net

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Our Customer Service: Continuing to offer prompt, personalized attention to our readers, retailers and advertisers.

Our Products: Providing high quality and affordably priced items.

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Antragon!

Bill heads down to the depths to witness a struggle of mammoth proportions!

Boxed pictures:

Hidden Outpost (Fred DeRuvo);
Sculptor, Martin Canale (Portfolio),
Todd McFarlane (© McFarlane).

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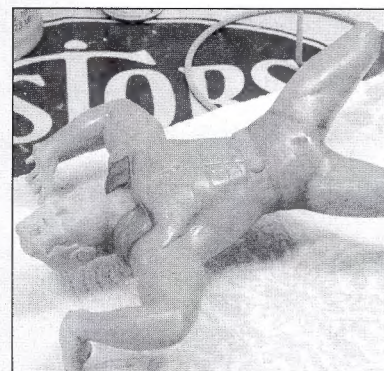
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Superman Re-Painted!

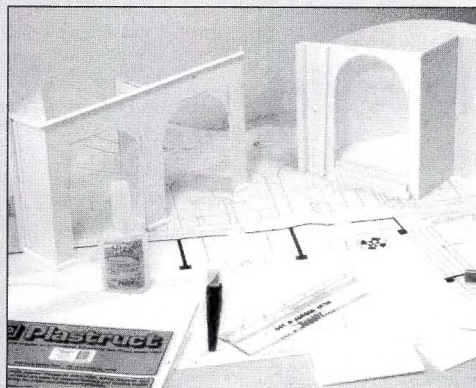
Where Norm Piatt finished, Fred takes over to paint!



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Skywalking to the Cantina! Part One

Hilber creates a scene from an all-time favorite Sci-Fi movie!



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"Help Me! Help Me!"

Whether he's reviewing, creating or both, it's still "All Plastic to Me!" for Jim Bertges



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Up Next!



Mr. N. Dorfin and the Osbournes...

I

was watching "Real TV™" not too long ago and was enjoying the fact that there are plenty of intelligence-impaired people in this world who are willing, it would seem, to engage in risky activities that may

cause them minor bodily harm, severe injury or even death. They are willing to do this for money, glory or just because one of their friends has a video camera nearby: "Hey, Joe, I'm going to light myself on fire and jump off my roof backwards! Film it, okay?! It should be fun."

As a nation, it seems that we thrive on living on the edge. That's where we achieve that "rush" that so many are constantly chasing after. The experts have figured out that this is the main reason people like horror movies, thrill rides and extreme living. It pushes us into that realm where our dopamine kicks in, creating that rush to which we can easily become addicted.

Me? I'd prefer to take the albeit longer, yet much safer way of getting a rush. I like to jog as I mentioned in the issue 46's Hobby Association Industry show coverage. Sometimes, the thrill of knowing that if I push myself harder along the pavement, I may yet run into that character, Mr. N. Dorfin. He's pretty elusive, but I keep trying.

Now, I'll be completely frank about something. I honestly believe that our society and its need for instant gratification rules out the possibility of doing things slowly and working at them over a period of time. We want it now and waiting is not an option. "You mean I can either free fall off the top of this 75-story building into that four foot water-filled bucket on the ground or jog for three miles to get that head rush?! C-ya!" and away he falls, headlong into a rush-induced state of euphoric paralysis of his own creation. Of course, the rush comes from the fact that he may in fact be cheating death by brushing up against it and continuing to live, but at what cost? Ah, what's a few broken bones or a crushed spinal chord? He lived. He took the bull by the horns and became the master of his own fate. It's too bad that people now have to help him go to the bathroom for the rest of his life, but he lived...

This is why kids are not heavily into modeling. I have figured it out and I'm not even going to charge you for this knowledge. Except for the rush to get it done, there is no head rush for them at all in building models. The dopamine never kicks in. There IS a rush for US because we know what to look for, when to expect it and when it will come and we have the patience because of that process. Kids? Uh-uh. Not there.

Speaking of dopamine, have you ever watched "The Osbournes?" I



recently tuned in and I was rolling on the floor with unintended laughter! Here was Ozzy Osbourne, the guy who is a god for heavy metal aficionados. He is THE master of head-bangin' heavy metal and always will be. Now, what's funny about this show is that cameras essentially allow us to be voyeurs into Ozzy's household, watching him and his family. In one episode, he is seen telling his son about the evils of drugs. The irony of it isn't lost on me. His son's response, of course, is that he's "not addicted to drugs or alcohol." He "does it" because (he) wants to do it. It's (his) choice." Finally, the son gets so ticked, that he presents his parents with a well thought-out viscous tirade that we don't get to enjoy because over half of it is "bleeped" out by the censors and then he storms off camera and out of the house because he has to "bleepin" be some "bleepin" place right the "bleep" now. Then, Ozzy gets up from the couch, grabs his cane and hobbles away, muttering under his breath! See? Laughter can be such a rush too!

A rush can come in all shapes and sizes and it can come from anywhere, expected or not. If we have the option of obtaining a rush by the safer, longer way or the quick, possibly death-defying way, which is your choice? Chances are, if you're a modeler, then it's the former. We CAN and SHOULD pass that along to kids. We CAN help them realize that life's rushes happen as we wait for them, sometimes without having to fall headlong into an abyss of our own making trying to outrace death.

Let's endeavor to help our children achieve what, as adults, is second nature to us. Help them understand that sometimes, a real rush only comes through hard work, time and patience. That's what modeling is all about and they NEED to see us do it before they can imitate it!

Enjoy this issue and we'll see you promptly the first week of November.

Fred

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"Don't Knock It!"

Fred,

WELL DONE! Your comments regarding WHAT we model was very well put (issue #46 - Ed). It is truly unfortunate that there are a few modelers who will think that building a Me 109 or a Godzilla model are somehow "beneath" them. I've been telling modelers like that to "don't knock it until you have tried it" for many years.

I have even helped modelers like that to try something out of their area of interest. It's a real adventure teaching someone that has only built cars or planes to paint a figure model. They have a greater understanding of what it takes to finish a resin figure kit and although they may not do another, they can appreciate what it takes to finish a model that they would not normally ever think of building. This applies to any type of model - car, ship, plane, figure, or whatever. In return, I have learned many things about models in areas I don't build. It is surprising what techniques you can pick up when you are building, for example, a car model, that you can apply to figures, airplanes, and ships.

I truly enjoy looking at ANY type of model at a show - no matter what the subject - and admire the work that went in to creating the finished model.

Remember, it's just a hobby - THE SAME HOBBY, and although what I build may be different than what you build, it does not mean that the models you build are any better than mine.

Terry D. Moore (E-mail)

- Thanks very much for writing and sharing your thoughts. Greatly appreciated.

"Let Me Stand Corrected"

Dear Modeler Resource,

I have been a modeler since I was a child. It is the one thing in life (other than my wife and daughter) that I truly enjoy. I have built models of tanks, planes, cars, dioramas, boats, submarines and whatever else caught my eye. Yet, in all my hours of cruising the aisles of my local hobby shop (RC HOBBIES in South Florida) I have never dared enter the Fiction and Sci-Fi aisle. For some reason I always figured it was taboo for me to go there, I mean no one who builds that stuff could be a serious modeler. Right? Well let me stand corrected. My wife picked up an issue of your magazine for me about a year ago and I was less than excited, until I opened it up one morning in my reading room (you know where I mean!); let me tell you, I read until my legs fell asleep and my wife thought I had fallen in. What a fantastic magazine! What great pictures! What wonderful writers!

Your writers are what really turned me on to your magazine (No! Not like that silly.). I enjoy that fact they write and build like I do, as in not perfectly. They are cool with mentioning the fact that perhaps everything did not come out perfect on their project. They give reasonable examples on how to solve problems. They are normal average guys and gals like me, not Super Gods of the modeling universe like some writers like to think they are. (Except for Bill Craft whom I actually think may be an uber-mench.)

What I want to say most importantly and probably have not yet done so is "Thanks!" Thanks for turning me on to a new and wonderful world of modeling. Thanks for letting me feel good about myself when I enter the forbidden Sci-Fi and Figure model aisle at my favorite store. Thanks for allowing me the renaissance of warm and fuzzy feelings when it comes to my hobby. Thanks for getting me to realize that there is life after modeling entire Panzer Divisions, and that "Yes Virginia!" you can be a real man and still Model Movie Monsters.

Keep up the good work and don't ever lose the talents of Bill Craft; he is truly a plus to the industry. By the way, I have e-mailed him numerous times concerning what type of translucent paints he uses, but he never answers me. Does he receive e-mail in his Super-Human World? What does it take for a peon like me to get a hold of such secret info? Just wondering. Let's see some more "Here is what I use" articles from him.

Thanks for all the fun. I will be renewing my MR subscription for many years to come.

With Good Words, Steven Kaye
(E-mail)

- Thank you so much for writing and for letting us know the part that Modeler's Resource has played in your life as a modeler. We never get tired of hearing that.

Our writers are fantastic! And yes, they experience the foibles and faults that any modeler experiences and they're not afraid to share them as you noted.

We took the liberty of forwarding your letter to Mr. Craft. I'm sure his not responding to you has merely been an oversight. He changed his e-mail address twice over this past year and it's very possible that was the cause of the problem. You should be hearing from him soon. Thank you for your commitment to MR and the hobby!

"Support Each Other!"

I'm writing this letter to let you know that I have just read (from cover to cover as ALWAYS), issue #46 of what has to be THE BEST

modeling publication on the market!! I love your magazine so much that I purchase TWO copies every issue; one that I read through religiously and one to file on my shelf just in case something happens to the first copy. Hey, ya gotta be prepared!

I totally agree with the editorial in issue 46 when it was stated that in order for our hobby to grow, we need to stop being modeling snobs and learn to support each other regardless of what genre we gravitate towards. I have learned a very important thing about modeling in all my years of enjoying the hobby. I have learned that regardless of genre, the techniques (whether you are building a "Panzer Tank" or a "Colonial Marine APC") are basically the same.

I'm not much into military modeling or car modeling, but I am a major Sci-Fi fan and I have found the same techniques can be used when building those. I find myself always sharing information with fellow modelers regardless of the genre.

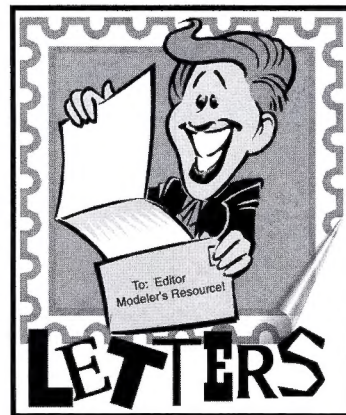
Knowledge is knowledge even when it doesn't directly apply to what you might be interested in at the time. There was a time when I was excited as a kid to build a Bell Huey or F-14 Tomcat. Those times have passed and I'm all grown up now. Now it's superheroes and spaceships! My advice to all my modeling comrades is to keep an open mind and try not to wear blinders that will keep you from perfecting your craft. You never know what the next person has to offer in the way of experience or technique. Thus ends the sermon.

My hat goes off, I take a bow and give two BIG thumbs up to you guys for such a great mag. KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK!!!

Robert Waters
267 W. Penn ave.
Wernersville, Pa 19565
SciFiModeler1@aol.com

P.S.- With so many letters you probably get to the editor, I don't expect this to be printed. But if you do, please include my name, address and E-mail. I am always looking for fellow model builders and welcome the communication. Thanks a million!!

- Thanks for writing, Robert. That particular editorial hit a nerve and we're glad. Many people wrote in or called to express their appreciation and agreement. In fact, an owner of a hobby store called to tell us that he felt our editorial should be placed on the front door of every hobby shop in America! We appreciate that, because this whole issue is definitely something that affects every modeler. As you've requested, we've included your contact information for those who may wish to contact you.



"From Fantplastic"

Dear Editor,

We would appreciate your including the following letter in your magazine. Thank you very much.

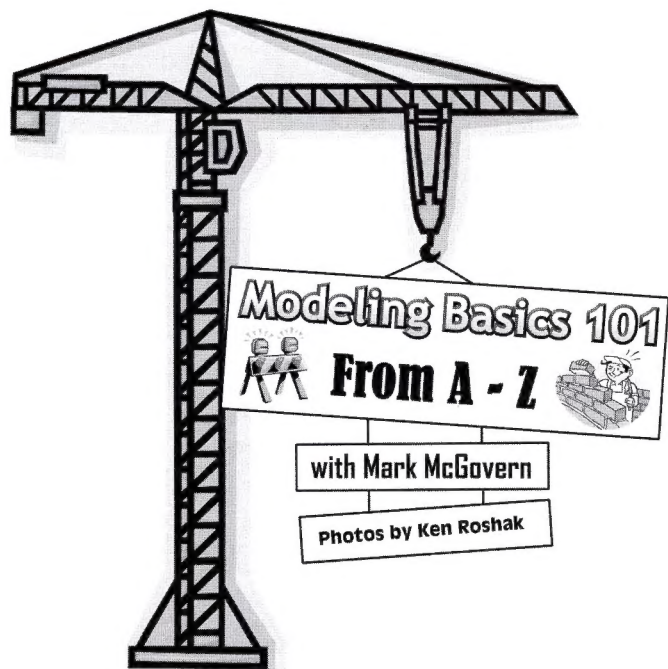
Being fans of the fantasy and horror genres, we were very happy to discover years ago, thanks to the American magazines, the wonderful world of garage kits. We immediately thought that we had to "spread the word" in our country and decided to create a magazine about them which we called, *Fantplastic*. It's been four years since then and we have struggled very hard for it, especially if we have in mind that most of the Spanish modelers only build military models and think of monsters and spaceships as something for children.

However, our biggest disappointment regarding the magazine has been that most of the companies we have written to in order to obtain information, catalogs, photos, etc. haven't even replied to us, thus making it quite difficult to keep our readers informed on the products they make and *Fantplastic* deals with. We have never earned any money with the magazine and we don't intend to: we are fans and we do this because we love the hobby. What happens? We are offering a free space for the companies' products. It's a very easy way to promote them and we can assure them they would even sell some kits.

We will be very happy to hear about any producer reading this letter and will also be pleased to send him a copy of *Fantplastic* to prove to him that we are serious. Thanks.

Luis H. Agüé
Enrique Blasco, Editors.
Fantplastic Magazine, Spain

- Gentlemen, thanks for writing. We've seen your publication and can vouch for its authenticity. This seems to be a difficulty for many publications. It is difficult to get some companies to send in product even if they are getting free publicity out of it. Some companies are extremely shortsighted about this while others have a tough time keeping on top of things like that.



Part 1: Getting Started, Hobby Knives, and Parts Prep

In *Modeler's Resource*® #45, two "Letters" column submissions stated the writers' desire to learn more about the basic supplies used in plastic modeling, and the techniques for employing them. At the time this issue appeared, I met a fellow MR reader at an IPMS model contest. We got to talking and he reiterated the concerns of those Letters column contributors.

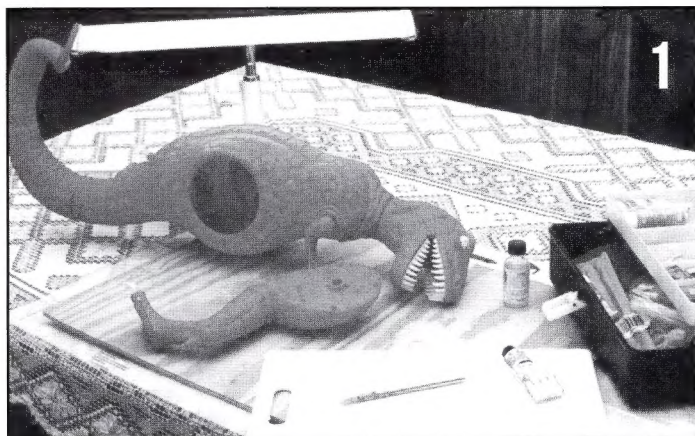
This made me think there might be many other MR readers who were either newcomers to the hobby, or had come back to it after a long absence. These modelers might find use for a general description of the basic tools, materials and techniques used to build plastic models. I suggested such a guide to Fred DeRuvo and this series is the result.

We'll go through all the steps of building a single styrene model kit, from start to finish. Along the way, common modeling terms will appear in bold type. To Bill Nardone and Michael Cook, who wrote to the "Letters" column, and Bob from Plymouth, Michigan, with whom I spoke at Century-Con 2002 I say: thanks for the idea, guys.

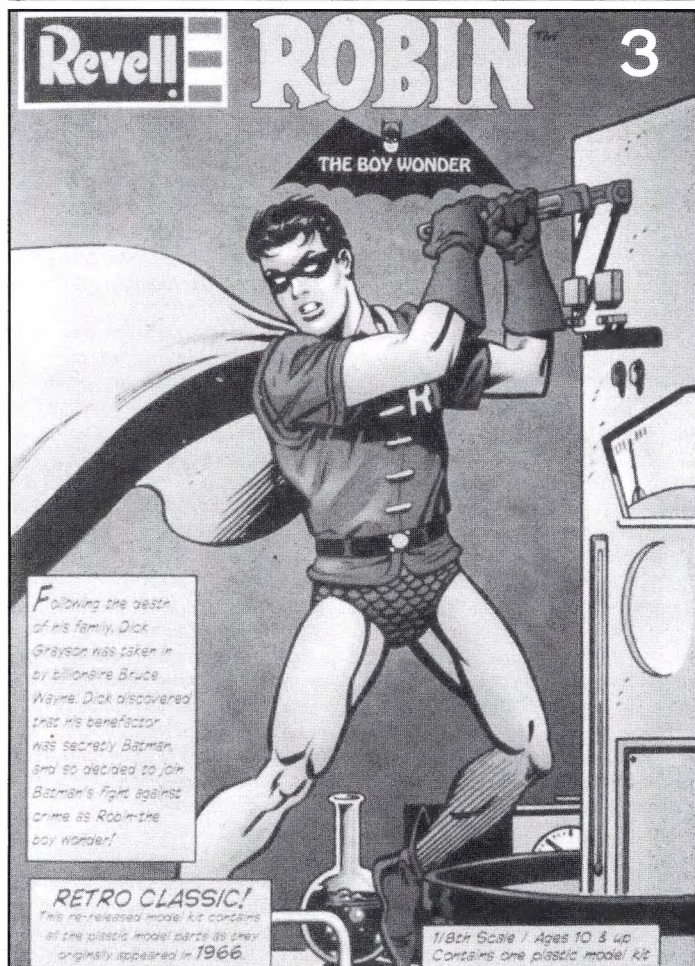
The very first requirement for building plastic models is a place in which to build them. If you have a basement or other dedicated workroom then the problem is solved. A workbench of some sort will be your next priority. This doesn't have to be a bench, necessarily - any sort of sturdy table will do.

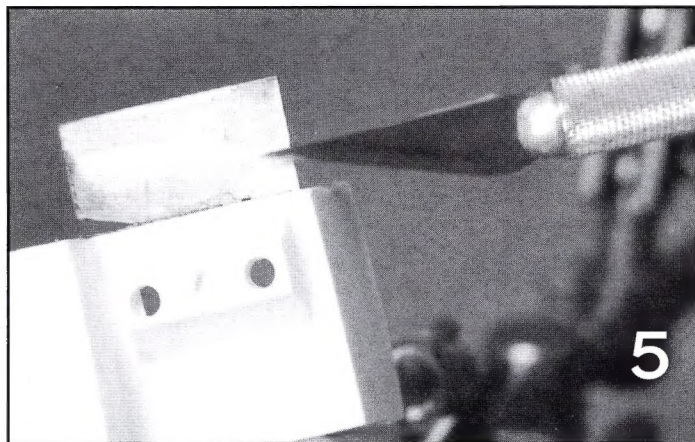
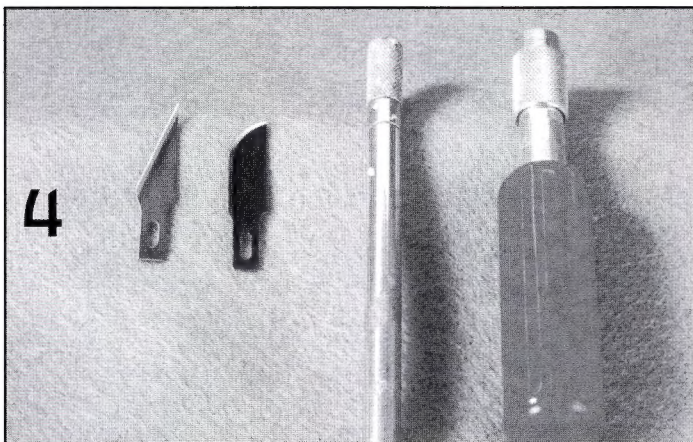
If you don't have a dedicated workspace, you'll need to adapt. A portable work surface is the easiest solution. This could be a piece of plywood or something similar. If the kitchen or dining room table will be under your work surface, you'll want to protect it. A covering, such as newspaper or the plastic sheeting used for painters' drop cloths, placed under your work surface will protect the tabletop from paint and/or glue spills. Make sure you have someplace to store your work surface at dinnertime! (Fig.1)

Right: Our subject: the reissue of Robin®.



Above: A portable modeling set-up. Below: Swing-arm lamp (left side of workbench) helps for close work.





Above left: #11, #10 knife blades & handles. Above right: Molding flaws, emphasized with a black wash.

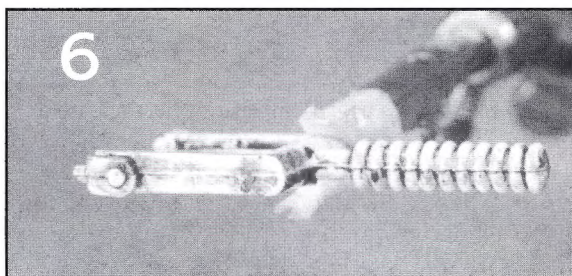
Once you've chosen your work area, you'll need to light it. Any form of overhead lighting will do for general purposes. But you'll also need a closer, brighter light for fine work. I use an inexpensive swing-arm lamp with a 60-watt bulb in it. The lamp clamps to the side of my workbench, and can be adjusted to place the light exactly where I need it (Fig. 2).

Two more items you'll find useful are a comfortable chair and a wastebasket. Note the word "comfortable" - you'll probably spend hours at a time in that chair! The wastebasket will come in handy to catch all the debris that accumulates from the building process. You'll need it sooner or later, so you might as well provide for it now.

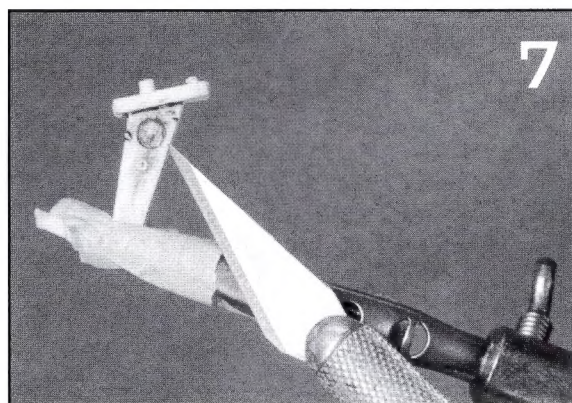
Okay, enough lecturing - let's start building already! The subject of this series will be Revell-Monogram's reissue of the 1966 Aurora Plastics Corporation model of Robin, the Boy Wonder (Fig. 3). This is a figure model, but the base also has "hardware" elements. I hope the treatment of the base will be useful for MR's Sci-Fi readers. Most important, I've never built this model before, so we'll all be learning something new!

The first step is the easiest. Take out the instructions and check to see that all the parts and decals are in the box. This way you'll know if everything is there and whether or not the parts are in good shape - occasionally an incomplete or damaged part will crop up. If you find such a part, or a part is missing, you have two choices. You can either return the kit to the place of purchase (which may not always be possible), or you can contact the manufacturer and try to get a replacement part. Many are happy to do this, but if the kit has been discontinued, you'll have your work cut out for you.

My sample of the Robin kit is in good condition. The next thing I do is to wash it carefully in soap and water. Doing this removes the thin coating of oily mold-release agents, used in the manufacturing process, from the plas-



Above: Close-up of part w/ mold-parting line on it.



Above: Close-up of part w/ ejector-pin mark on it.

tic parts. These substances might interfere with the adhesives used to assemble the kit. So I scrub the parts with an old toothbrush dipped in cheap dish soap. I rinse the parts with warm water, and allow to air dry.

When they've dried, I can prepare them for assembly. For that I'm going to need a hobby knife. This is perhaps the most necessary tool for any modeler. The best-known brand is X-Acto®. Their knives, handles, and related supplies are available in most hobby shops and many hardware and art-supply stores. The #11 blade is good for most work. The #10 blade is similar, but has a curved edge, which is useful for working on round surfaces (Fig. 4). When handling these blades, BE CAREFUL! - they're razor sharp. Sooner or later you'll draw blood with them, I guarantee...

Here are a few hints about buying hobby blades:

Although I mentioned X-Acto, there are several other manufacturers that make knives which are just as good, and may be cheaper. It's often better to buy your supplies in bulk. The hundred-count pack of knife blades costs much less per blade than the standard five-count blister pack. You'll change these blades a lot, because that desirable razor-sharp edge dulls quickly with use.

So here's another hint: Keep a second knife handle to hold that dulled but still useful blade. Label one handle for the fresh blade that has the sharpest point. The duller blade can still be used to scrape seams, apply putty, etc. You'll get more service from your knife blades that way.

Which brings us to hint number three: When you dispose of these blades, do so safely. Some dispensers have a slot into which you can shove the dulled knife blade. If you must throw the blade into the trash, wrap the cutting edge with a piece of masking tape first. The deep, painful cut you save might be your own!

In plastic modeling, as in many other activities, it

Modeling Basics...Continued from Page 9

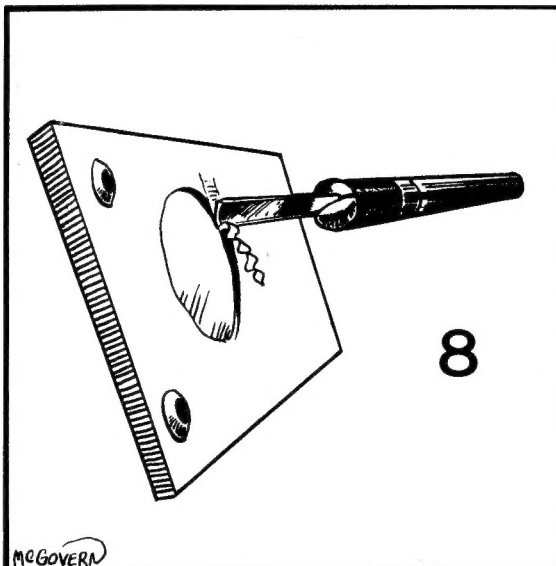
pays to Think Ahead (as my dear old dad always told me). You don't want to cut up your workbench, so a cutting surface is a handy item. This might be as simple as a section of floor tile (which is available at flooring or home improvement stores), a plastic kitchen cutting board (get one of your own - the chef in your home will appreciate it), or a self-healing cutting mat. These mats can be found where hobby or art supplies are sold, but they can be expensive.

Back to Robin: the parts have been accounted for, and the oily manufacturing residues washed off. Now we'll get them ready for assembly.

Those plastic rods that the kit parts came attached to are called sprues. These were the channels through which the hot plastic flowed during the injection-molding process, which formed the model. Very often, sprues are molded with an identifying number for each part. The Robin kit only has thirty-seven parts, so this isn't a big deal. But if you're building something intricate, with perhaps hundreds of parts, then you'll find it a good idea to leave the parts on the sprue until you need them. Also, small parts that have been left on the sprue will be easier to paint.

If you remove the parts from the sprues just by twisting them off, you risk damaging the part. Your hobby knife can cut them off cleanly. If a little bit of sprue remains on the part, it can be trimmed or scraped off. Save those sprues - you'll find many uses for them, as we'll learn later on.

Once the part is off the sprue, you'll want to eliminate the molding flaws left by the manufacturing process. These flaws mar the appearance of the part. Removing them can be tedious, but the effort will pay off by immedi-



Above: Drawing which depicts removal of ejector-pin mark by scraping w/ edge of hobby knife.

ately improving your model's look of authenticity.

Flash is a molding flaw that turns up at the edges of some parts (Fig. 5). This is formed when a little of the molten styrene seeps in between the two molds that make the part. Flash is often caused by wear on the molds of older models. A little trimming will take it off the part. Mold-parting lines are another common flaw to be found on plastic kit parts (Fig. 6). These appear as little raised ridges at the point where the two halves of the mold meet to form the part. A little scraping and sanding will eliminate these lines.

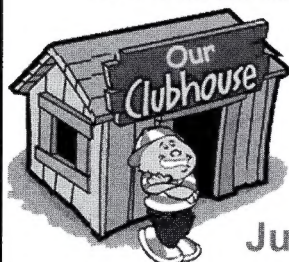
Ejector-pin marks are common on styrene models (Fig. 7). Once the molding is complete, the ejector pins push against the newly formed kit parts to pop them out of the mold. If the impression of the pin appears in a visible area of the model, you'll want to remove it. Here's where that curved #10 knife blade is handy. Just scrape the side of the blade lightly over the ejector-pin mark until the edges have faded (Fig. 8). A little sanding might be needed to finish the job. Deep marks (or voids) in the plastic surface called sinkholes may require filler (which we'll get to in Part Three of this series).

Yes, parts prep can be a tedious part of your project, but it will ultimately be a rewarding one. Once the appearance of the parts has been refined, it'll be time to assemble them. But what with? We'll examine our choices in Part 2: Glues, Shaping Tools, and Fun With Seams.



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Long ago, in an age where uncertainty reigned and the industry was still in its much maligned infancy, a decision was made to begin a magazine. The goal was to publish an issue six times each year, on time. This turned out to be a swell decision and it was heralded throughout the modeling kingdom. Growth was slow, but steady and eventually this magazine became a best seller, known throughout the modeling world as one of quality and timeliness. But without the constant quality-filled articles that are routinely supplied by some of the best builders and painters in the industry, this magazine would not have grown, it would not be continually growing and it would have little future. Since those who write for *Modeler's Resource* have helped this magazine become what it is now, it was felt that time and space should be set aside so that you can learn more about each of our semi-regular and regular writers. Here is the start of what will be a multi-part article that will run over a number of issues. You'll see our writers' faces and read their own words. And now, **PART THREE** of our "Writer's Box" where, among other things, you will find the answer to this immensely important question as it applies to each writer:

Who Are They and What Do They Want?

Mike Fredericks

Hi, my name is Mike Fredericks and I write a regular column in this glorious publication, called *Prehistoric Trail*. I also have published my own glorious publication titled *Prehistoric Times* for nine years now. Obviously, I have a keen interest in prehistoric life and model kits. All of that writing magic is created in my Northern California home where I live with my wife, three children and two dachshunds (a twenty-minute drive from our fearless *Modelers Resource* leader, Fred DeRuvo. The intensity of two such powerful publishing magnates in such a small area has been known to cause power outages in the metropolitan Sacramento area). My age is my business and my business alone but I was born in 1955 (when giant lizards ruled the still cooling earth) if that helps any.

Without getting too corny or "doing a Barbara Walters" trying to make you shed tears on your magazine, suffice to say I have always loved models (and those things you glue together and paint ain't bad either - spoken in my best Groucho Marx voice). I was literally building models before I was old enough to build models. In other words, some of my fondest memories are of sitting with my dad while he "helped" me build my latest model kit. I have a photo of myself at age 8 with an Aurora Creature from the Black Lagoon, Visible Man and B-47 (the airplane my father flew in the Air Force) model kits around me. My mother has written "Mike's most prized possessions" under it in the photo album.

My modeling interest waned for a while thanks in part to girls, beer and rock and roll but came back to me in the mid-1980s thanks especially to Bill Bruegman's magazine *Model and Toy Collector*. I began to collect models more than build them at that time and also began to write about them. You know what they say, if you can't do...write! I also had the ultimate dream job then. No, I wasn't a photographer for *Playboy*, I was a professional modeler. I worked for several years with two different companies making architectural, engineering and other models of any subject the client would pay for. I also used to do fairly well at local model contests with military model kits I built including 2nd place in the Nationals when they were held in Sacramento. I am interested in well-done kits of all subjects and enjoy building models more than painting them. I am a self-proclaimed glue guru, which my wife appreciates when small objects are broken around the house. "No problem, honey,



Glue Guru is here!" I am also a University of California graduate in art.

With those "credentials" and most importantly my intense interest in the subject of toys and models, I have written rather extensively for numerous publications over the past 15 years or so. I was happy to write this little biography because, like I told Fred, there's nothing I enjoy discussing more than models and myself. Now, please go and read *Prehistoric Trail* and order one of the dinosaur models I review there. If there's anything I don't like about the modeling industry, it's that new kits don't come out often enough. It is your support that will help remedy this situation.

Jim Key

I grew up as a child of the sixties with all the really cool TV shows and movies (hence the influence). I am a "professional obsessed modeler," eking out a business making extremely limited, one-of-a-kind miniature collectibles for collectors. When I was 5, my "Dear old dad" turned me on to modeling. That and art have been my interest throughout my life.

A Ford Fairlane 500, probably from MPC, was the first kit I ever built, if I remember correctly... Also, helping dad with the 1st issue Visible V8 Engine. I enjoy working on anything really, but mostly Sci-Fi. I enjoy everything about modeling. I design, research, layout, fund, execute, mold, cast, assemble, prime and paint everything I make. Creating dioramas are very enjoyable in that you are creating whole environments, which are more often than not the most essential elements for giving life to the illusion modeling portrays.

I normally spend 6 days a week, 50 weeks a year working on models and so far, I'd have to say that beside being "Jupiter 2 boy," the 66" Nautilus we just did is perhaps the most taxing effort.

I've put it into a miniature, save for the 1/35 scale Jupiter 2 Launch Site I did back in 1991. That was the most fulfilling diorama I've ever created.

If I could change something about the modeling industry, I would work to educate the modeling public to realize just how much effort goes into producing limited run kits, and what it takes to produce really good quality - thus the expense.



SUPERMAN: Re-Painted!



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You'll recall that Norm Piatt did a really nice conversion of the Aurora/Revell Superman™ into the Lindberg Animated Superman that never made it to store shelves or modeling workbenches? It was another one of those cases where the licensing fee was the deciding factor in whether or not the kit would eventually make it to production. Ultimately, the modeler lost out, but that happens from time to time and not just in the modeling industry either as we all know too well.

Well, I'm happy to say that I have a reasonable facsimile of the kit in question because of Norm's uncanny ability to sculpt/convert from existing parts and pieces. In this article my job is to go where Norm didn't - painting! This, for me is always the fun part. Watching the model/character come to life by applying layers of bright, colorful pigments is always worth it.

I began with the base (which was essentially a pile of rubble), emulating the base on the Lindberg kit. Norm carved out brick and stone and placed them in a couple of piles as if a building had just collapsed. Norm left the center area





Above: Superman starts to take shape with vibrant Tamiya colors. The Sky Blue is gloss, so it would need to be hit with Testors DullCote™ to take away the sheen.



Right: There is still a good amount of detailing to go, but Superman is beginning to "come alive!"

empty because this was where our superhero would be standing. I used a number of Tamiya brand paints, airbrushing them over the surface in a crisscross pattern, then I painted the bricks individually. After this, I did some drybrushing on the brick and stone and finally, I covered the entire base with a couple of different washes to blend it together and get rid of that "clean" look. I created the washes out of Badger's Freak Flex paints and water. Even though these Freak Flex paints are fairly thin (perfectly suitable for use in an airbrush without having to further thin them), they needed to be thinned more to use as a wash.

I chose to use Tamiya Flat Red for the undercoat that was applied to Superman's shorts, boots and cape. Over this, I airbrushed Pactra (Testors) Flat Insignia Red which, like most of the Pactra flat paints, has a slight sheen to it. I didn't want a totally flat look.

I've got to say that I absolutely love the way Norm did Superman's face. It's very comic book oriented and you can definitely see the Animated Superman in it. Of course, because this is meant to be a cartoon character, the question then arises as to how realistically detailed do you make it? By nature, cartoon characters are pretty "clean" looking, devoid of a lot of shading, etc. I needed to balance this out with the detail on the base, so I decided to keep Superman himself fairly clean looking, without the shading.

As far as the steel beams, I sprayed those with Model Master Gun Metal, right from the can and then created some small areas of rust, using Rustall™. I dug into one of my Revell Superman kits to retrieve the decals and applied them to the chest of Superman and the back of the cape.

After some final detailing that included the hair, eyes and a few other minor areas, I was pretty much done.

The only thing that I added to this kit was a nameplate of sorts. I did this by creating the look I wanted in Photoshop, then printed the finished nameplate out onto high gloss, photographic paper to the size that I wanted. I cut it out carefully and matched it to the same shape of sheet styrene, then glued it onto the front of the base. Voila! I was done and I was the proud owner of my very own Animated Superman kit that never was! I owe it to Norm "Kitman" Piatt! Thanks Norm!





Kits That Time Forgot



Aurora's Frankenstein Lives Again

Article, Buildup and Pictures by Mike Morgan

In 1961, Aurora produced their first monster model kit - Frankenstein! Immensely popular, this kit opened the door for a number of Universal Studios Monster Models to be produced. Aurora reissued the Frankenstein kit in 1969 and again in 1972. A few years later it was reissued again by Monogram in a glow in the dark version. Playing Mantis issued this current version for distribution through Toys-R-Us. Consisting of 24 parts, including a base, this kit is very easy to build and a blast to paint.

As a kid growing up in the 60s, monsters in comic books and in black and white movies were my favorites. When Aurora came out with the monster models, my allowance money started a new obsession - building and painting models. Oh, if I only had those models today! Thanks to younger brothers and Mom cleaning, they went by the wayside many years ago.

Putting together this Frankenstein took the usual tools and steps for building a styrene kit. After the cleaning and priming, the Frankenstein coloring was applied with acrylic paints. I must admit this Frankenstein paint job looks a heck of a lot better than the one I painted nearly 40 years ago. How time flies when you're having fun! This piece will sit on my shelf protected from the garbage can!

These Playing Mantis kits are great for new modelers - very affordable, easy to build and fun to paint. They're also great for us original Aurora fanatics - we can relive our childhood once again. Playing Mantis has a good variety of kits to check out. Look for them at Toys-R-Us, hobby shops and even Wal-Mart. Give them a try. You too may find a new obsession!

Dracula

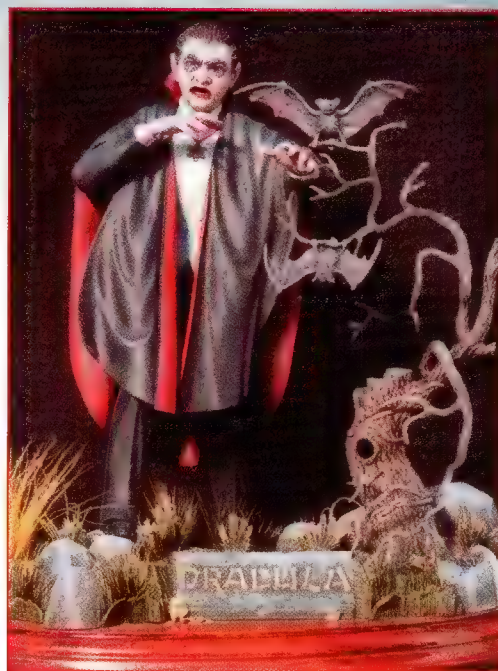
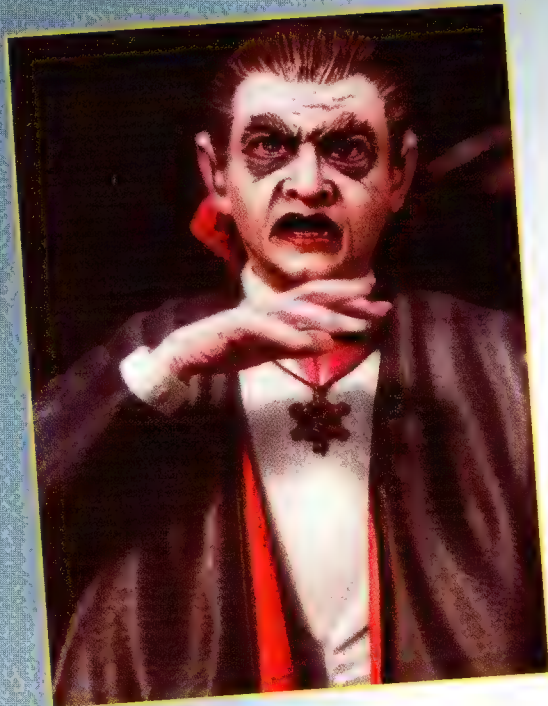
Revell-Monogram/Polar Lights/Cinemodel
1999 Reissue of Aurora kit

Article by Mark McGovern; Photographs by Ken Roshak

By early 1962, Aurora Plastics Corporation discovered that it had a phenomenal success with its first monster model, Frankenstein. By the end of that year, Aurora had the next two kits in the series in production. The obvious choice for monster model number two was Dracula.

The 1999 reissue of the kit, with its original James Bama cover art, was irresistible to me. I already had a finished Monogram reissue; this went to a friend. I started Dracula afresh, with all the enthusiasm I'd had as a kid back in the sixties.

Assembly began with all the elements of the model that involved the joining of two halves: the legs, feet, upper body, head, arms and the tree trunk. The leg assembly wasn't cemented to the upper body until painting was complete to save having to mask the trousers where the white vest overlapped them. The arms were glued to the torso and the feet were glued to the legs, then I set the completed figure elements aside. I kept the bowtie and collar piece separate to make it easier to paint the ribbon on the front body half.



The next big task was to clean up the single parts of the model: the ring, hands, cape pieces, bats, spider and tree branches. I left the ring, bats and hands on their respective sprues, in some cases reinforcing the parts' attachments by gluing plastic scraps to help hold them in place. Then the flash was scraped off all the small items. I smoothed the knife work in different ways. For the hands, I sanded with 400 grit sandpaper. The knife marks on the tree branches were brushed with lacquer thinner. This softened them and imparted a molded-on appearance.

The flash wasn't always a liability. For example, it followed the mold-parting lines around the outlines of the hands. By leaving the flash intact at the fingertips, I was able to enhance the appearance of the fingernails. I carefully shaved the flash running along the edges of the weed patches to create the effect of smaller, thinner weeds growing at the sides of the clumps.

The figure and the base were finished with Testors' solvent-based enamels. Dracula's shirt and vest proved to be very hard to paint because these areas had so little texture to them. The pigment in Testors' Flat White is just too coarse to drybrush over without getting a pebbly appearance. It took me seven tries before I got the smooth effect I wanted, using artist oils. I learned that the shadow colors on a white surface must be kept very light in order to avoid them looking too harsh.

Despite the fact that he was 500 years old, Dracula had to have a fairly natural appearance. For the face and hands, I used Windsor and Newton Artist Oils. These dry overnight - much slower than model

paints - which gave me plenty of time to work subtle effects into the flesh colors.

The cape posed a problem since it had to be assembled over the completed figure. The two front sections simply couldn't be joined to the back piece and then slipped over Dracula's arms. Therefore, the seam where the three cape pieces joined had to be filled and smoothed after they and the figure had already been painted.

Once the painted figure and cape sections had all been cemented together (taking a lot of time to get the best fit of the cape pieces I could), I filled the seams with gap-filling superglue and sanded them smooth. Some of the original texture on the outside of the cape had been lost, probably due to the age of the molds. I'd replaced this texture by stippling on a little Liquitex Acrylic Gel Medium with a stiff brush. I followed the same procedure to cover the seams of the cape sections, then touched up the paint with a brush.

Aurora provided a pretty complex base for Dracula, even though this was only the second model in their monster series. The figure stands quite close to the three branches, so they should be cemented to the tree trunk after it and Dracula have already been glued to the base. I added a lot of deer-tail hair "grass" to the weed patches to make them look more natural. Some small leaves were scattered around the base to create a dismal, autumnal look. It took me about 50 hours to

complete Dracula; a lot of that time was spent trying to get the right look for his white shirt and vest.

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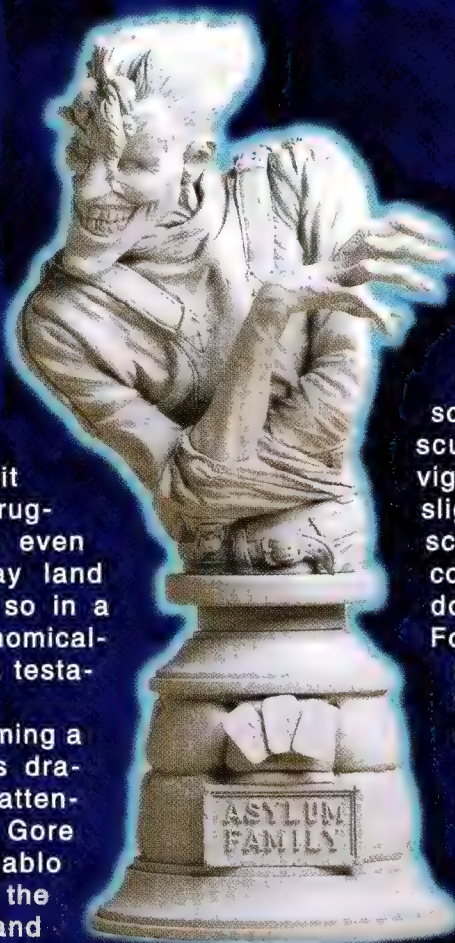
MARTIN CANALE

Interview by Norm "Kitman" Piatt



Up until the release of LifeForce Studio's Dark Hunter, Martin Canale may have been one of the figure sculpting industry's best-kept secrets. Argentina is a long way away from the figure sculpting kit industry. To say that it's a struggle to get your work out or even noticed from such a faraway land goes without saying. Doing so in a country that is struggling economically, politically and socially is a testament to his sculpting talents.

Martin Canale is fast becoming a force in the industry with his dramatic style of sculpture and attention to detail. Martin's studio, Gore Group with partner Pablo Viggiano, is creating some of the most original concepts and designs of comic book heroes to date. Weapon-X is a fine exam-



ple of this creative teams work. Martin and Pablo can do more creatively with a sculpture's pedestal than most sculptors can do with an entire piece. Take the Weapon-X sculpture for instance, the pedestal and sculpture work as one to become a vignette. The pedestal is not merely a slightly decorative resting place for the sculpture. Together they have been commissioned to create more than a dozen bust sculptures for Dynamic Forces. Each bust has an originality and creative expression unlike anything else in the comic book figure sculpting industry.

Let's read what some of his contemporaries have to say.

The Shiflett Brothers

Martin's portfolio is incredible, at the San Diego comic con we really look forward to seeing him and his new stuff. It's dark and



Super Deformed

LOBO

HEIGHT: 9.84 INCHES



DARK HUNTER

SCALE 1/11
HEIGHT 23 CM
WIDTH 10 CM

cutting edge. Martin should be a huge inspiration to up-and-comers. He's doing professional stuff all the way from Argentina that takes a lot of drive. I think we just always look at him and are impressed by what he's doing.

Casey Love "Clone Factory":

I took one look at Martin's work and was blown away by the sheer power of the anatomy.

Mark Vantine "CK Sculptor":

To me, Martin just came out of nowhere! I remember the first time I saw his work; it was his incredible Dark Hunter kit for Lifeforce Studios. It was much too good for a debut! Now to me at least, he has risen to the top like cream in milk. Not through politics or connections - just pure ability and that's what makes him more deserving of praise. Then add the fact that he comes from Argentina where

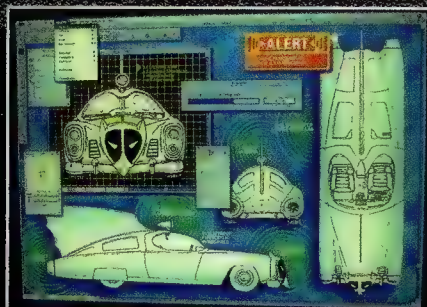


there is even less support for this kind of pursuit which makes him more impressive. While many sculptors show an expertise in anatomy, composition, technical bravado, etc., but rarely every aspect, Martin seems to have mastered ALL the disciplines. To top it off, he comes across as a very humble and gracious individual. All I can say is "bravo" Martin! You're a welcome addition to our ranks.

MR: While Martin Canale is busy at work sculpting some of the best in comic books, he is also very busy working at his own line of sculptures. He is currently looking for kit producers to help bring this line to life. With the commissioned work, he is still in the confines of the company wants. Only one look at his original sculpts on these pages and you can see how unbelievably unique Martin's

No Longer Just Styrene, the Model Industry Says...

THE DIE IS CAST!



Plans are to release these two Batmobiles in diecast form and others may be produced as well!



A number of larger scale diecast Batmobiles will join their smaller sized diecast model cousins soon enough!

Diecast cars, trucks and planes have been with us for quite a few years. A number of the model companies have diecast divisions that have been busy pumping out all types of diecast subjects. Quite a few of these are highly collectible and have grown to be worth quite a bit on the collectible trading market. Personally, with the exception of the Matchbox® or Corgi® cars that I had as a kid and have spent some time collecting again as an adult, I was never really into diecast collectibles.

Over the past number of years, we've begun to see an interesting anomaly occurring within the modeling arena. Not only have diecasts continued to be available, but we've seen the emergence of the diecast model; one that is put together by the hobbyist! Many of these diecast models are highly detailed, with numerous parts that need to be either snapped or screwed into place. Once completed, like all other models, they can be placed on the shelf as part of the modelers collection, or young people can play with them. Since diecast are usually made mostly of metal, they stand up to rough play much better than a normal styrene model does. This increases their value.

Even though, these types of models have made their way to the fore within the industry, I've never been too enthralled by them. To me, they are simply toys that never made it all the way through the assembly line. You buy 'em and you put 'em together. Seems kind of odd, but in some ways, we all buy things that we need to put together before we can use them,

so I guess buying a metal vehicular toy is no different.

As I said, these particular items normally do not hold a great deal of interest for me and that is mainly because of the subject matter involved. I wouldn't purchase a 1969 Mustang diecast model any sooner than I would purchase a styrene version. Nice to look at (better to own the full scale model!), but that's it.

What I've noticed though over the past few years is the fact that a number of companies have gotten involved in producing diecast models based on character-related properties that pique my interest. The traditional, 1966 Batmobile in 1/24th diecast scale was announced a while ago from Danbury Mint, but we've yet to see it. As their picture shows and the flyer suggests, it is highly detailed and highly desirable for the collector. The only downside is for those who actually like to build and paint their own version. On this one, you simply take it out of the box and set it on the shelf! No work, no sweat, no mess. However, one thing you can always do is add a diorama base to frame your diecast piece. If this beauty ever makes it to production, we'll be getting one.

Polar Lights' Johnny Lightning division has, for a number of years, produced smaller diecast cars and many of these have been related to many characters that we've grown up with, such as The Munsters™. These items have become very popular and highly sought after. It is only natural then, that the folks at Polar Lights make another seque into the diecast modeling market. They've done so with a number of, again,

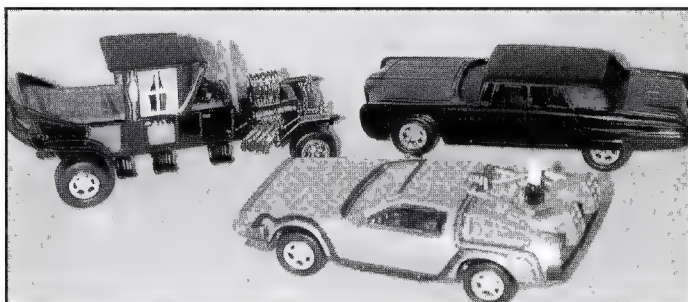
character-related vehicular subjects on the small scale that may prompt you to purchase some either for you or the modeling child in your home.

I'm highlighting a number of new ones from PL that showcase the quick process of building one of these smaller scale, diecast models. As you can see, they've taken some popular properties and turned them into miniature diecast models that you put together. If you have kids who are only interested in diecast, this is a good way to get them possibly interested in models!

Putting them together is fairly easy, provided your close-up eyesight is what it should be. If not, feel free to grab an opti-visor! If you have sausages for fingers, you may also experience some difficulties in building because these parts are small! Once you've completed these little diecast gems, then you can build small dioramas for them, set them on the shelf next to the 1:24 scale styrene model or let your son or daughter play with them!

It seems that PL has been ready to experiment even more because as you may or may not know, they're releasing a number of Batman™-related models, as we announced in issue #45. Beyond this though, there are a number of diecast vehicles, which will be released in nearly the same scale. High quality, highly sought after, these diecast vehicles will be ones that you will want to add to your collection if you are a Batman fan. Scheduled for release are the 1965 comic book version of the Batmobile, along with the 1950s version. If things go well, we can also look forward to a 1940s version of Batman's favorite set of wheels! Let's keep our fingers crossed.

You know, it's funny, but just when you think the industry is slowing down and things are going awry,



Munsters™ Koach, Green Hornet's™ Black Beauty™ and Back to the Future™ Time Machine: three 1:64 scale diecast models of some of your favorite character-related vehicles! Others not shown include the Drag-u-la™ and the Partridge Family™ Bus!

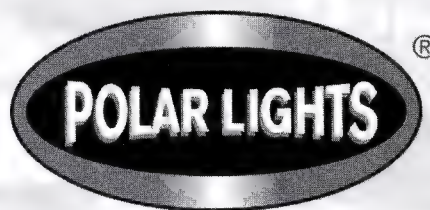
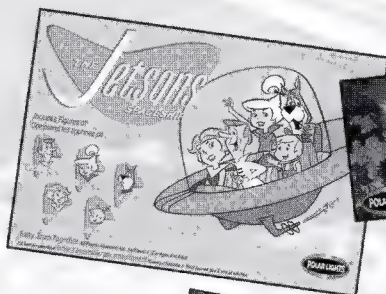
some new products come out that capture our interest and pump up our excitement!



Could there be another contest in the wings? *We're giving strong consideration to having a contest where the contest entrant would build a diorama with one of these diecasts or styrene models as the centerpiece. Does that sound good?* Let us know if that sparks your interest and in the meantime, let's keep our eyes open for these upcoming pieces from Polar Lights/Johnny Lightning with the hope of seeing more on the shelf!

"MAKE A BASE" CONTEST!

Brought to you by two companies within the industry that stand for QUALITY!



TWO PRIZES:

- Any currently available Polar Lights Kit
- A one-year subscription (or extension) to Modeler's Resource®

TWO CATEGORIES:

- Kids 12 and Under
- Adults

PURPOSE:

Put your creativity to work and use either the Jetsons' Spacemobile or the Seaview in a diorama of your own design and making and then enter your photos in this contest. You could be a winner! One winner in each category.

Winners agree to have their photos placed on either the PL or MR website or both and/or highlighted in the pages of Modeler's Resource magazine. All photos become the property of Modeler's Resource and cannot be returned. Stay tuned for more details upcoming. Contest deadline to be announced soon.



The Incredible... **Resin Head Transplant** *with Alan Friedman*

Horror movies I enjoyed as a youngster got me interested in the old Aurora model kits. More than two decades later I'm in a career still influenced by those films. That same interest and the promise of kits such as PYTHON'S "ABBOTT and COSTELLO meet FRANKENSTEIN" got me back into the hobby a few years ago.

It was one of the first kits I collected, but it was not a beginner's kit, at least not until I discovered it WAS the first kit Al Reboiro ever sculpted and manufactured (PHOTO #1).

Had I the knowledge then of what a well-cast garage kit should be like, I never would have attempted it. The kit was not for the novice, inexperienced or faint of heart. As a matter of fact, just by the nature of retooling, customizing and finishing the kit, I became an advanced modeler!

Besides endless hours creating mounds of resin dust with my Dremel Tool just to remove the fingerprints in the sculpture, the seaming, filling and resculpting went on for some time. Some of the parts - the hands and feet - (PHOTOS #2 & 3) were just easier to recast than to try to repair.

Liquid latex rubber was used to create small flexible molds from acceptable "donor" body parts culled from other kits (PHOTO #4). Resin copies were poured from the molds of the hands, feet and the hat.

The hat had to be reworked since it was never designed to fit either the character of Abbott or Costello and was intended to be used as a prop (see base in



PHOTO# 1).

A base from Dimensional Designs substituted for the base provided. After painting, pinning and gluing, the construction was complete (PHOTO # 5)...or was it?

Just as I had finally completed this labor of love, I received a catalog from Reboiro's "NIGHT GALLERY" store (*now closed - Ed*). It touted an all-new, retooled version of the very same kit I had just completed!

Having done the best I could, even reworking the original, I decided to replace the old Frankenstein head with one from the new version.

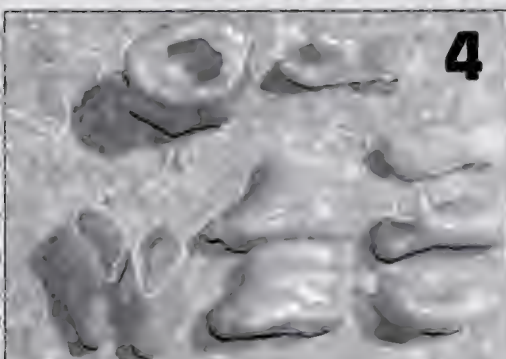
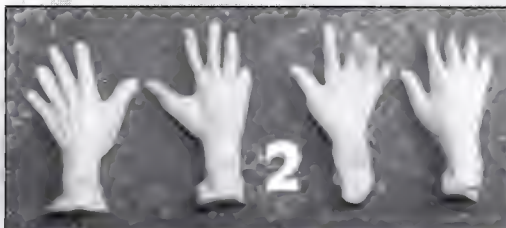
The new Monster had been sculpted in 6 pieces, while the old one was just one piece, so to replace the head we were talking some serious "surgery" here!

The finished kit was wrapped and covered with tin foil and taped with plastic to localize the "surgical" field, and keep all the soon to be flying resin dust from sticking to the various shades of green turf "mold" already in place (PHOTO #6).

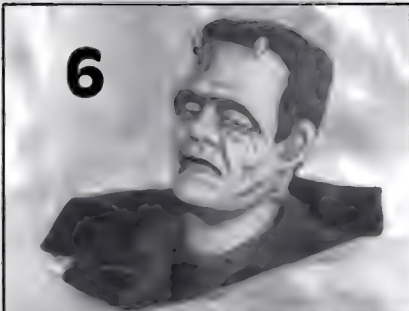
Starting with a cutting blade on a Dremel Tool (PHOTO #7), and then a hacksaw blade (PHOTO #8), the head was unceremoniously removed from the Monster's neck and shoulders and then prepped for the new head using the Dremel again with various router bits (PHOTO # 9).

The new head is seamed, sanded, primed and prepped for painting (PHOTO # 10).

Base, highlights and shadows are airbrushed (PHOTO # 11)



"The new Monster had been sculpted in 6 pieces, while the old one was just one piece, so to replace the head, we were talking some serious "surgery" here!"



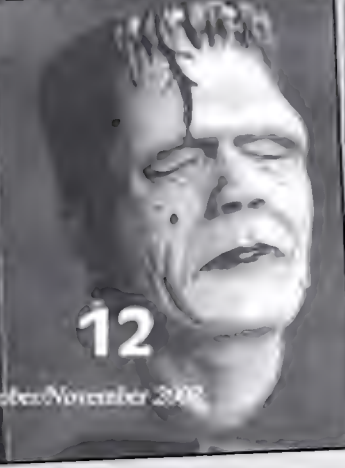
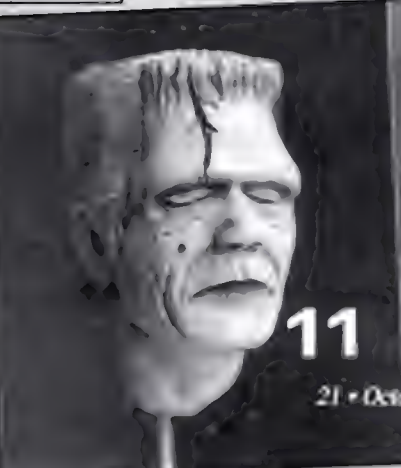
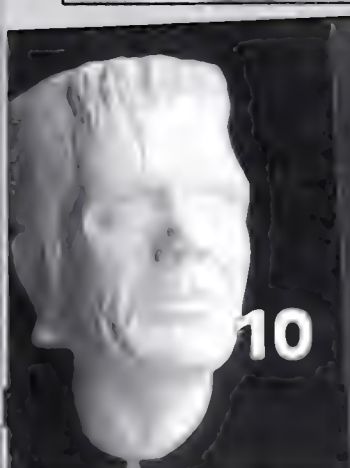
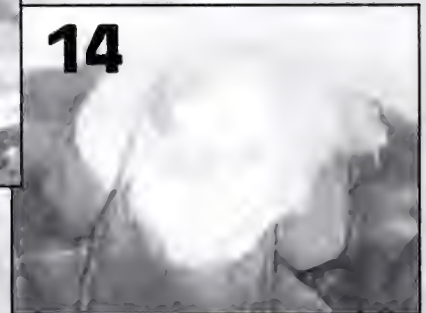
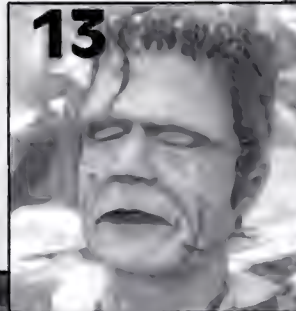
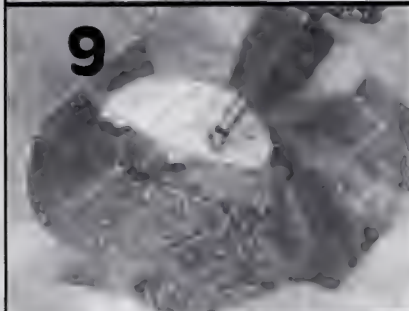
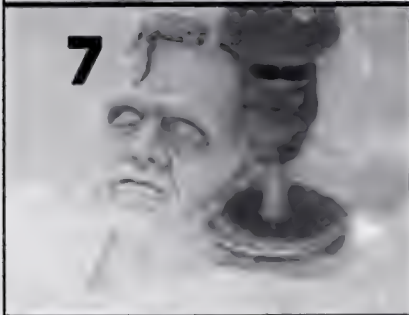
Washes, detailing and flat spray and gloss touches are added (PHOTO #12).

New head is fitted into the routed-out neck and shoulders (PHOTO #13).

A new shirt and collar are sculpted from Magic Sculpt, cured and primed (PHOTO #14).

The head transplant is complete! (PHOTO #15)

Compare the newly completed kit (PHOTO #16) with the first version (PHOTO #5) and the original version professionally built up by the manufacturer (PHOTO #1).



Goodies & Gadgets

AVES PRODUCTS



Shown on the left are a few products from one of our well-known advertisers that we're confident that you will find to your liking, mainly because these products work and work well. Do you remember the Tick sculpt that Norm "Kitman" Piatt showcased for us not long ago? Most of that conversion work was done using Aves' Clay Shay.

Aves also produces a quality Paper Maché product, which is an all-around, multi-purpose, non-toxic, no asbestos maché, made with virgin paper pulp. It is convenient and ready for use with the addition of water and has a 30-minute set time.

Finally, we're highlighting another product called, Apoxie Clay. Some of the benefits include: Plasticity and handling features that make this clay very user friendly, working time is about 1 - 2 hrs., curing to a hard waterproof finish in 24 hrs. Simple water cleanup and you should use this product if you are sensitive to solvent-based epoxy. Apoxie® Clay is much safer.

All of these products are available from Aves and to find out more about how they work and which product might serve you best for that next application, check them out on the Internet at www.avesstudio.com

DESIGN MASTER SPRAY STAINS

Long-time readers of Modeler's Resource® will remember that we introduced Design Master's Blackwash to our reading audience way back in issue 22! It was a product that was designed to produce a sort of "wash." Well, that particular product has been discontinued (though you may still find it at local stores) and has been replaced with the product that is shown to the left.

Design Master's Home Decor Charcoal Stain is the newest advance in this paint technology. It is designed specifically to provide an aged, washed look and it does it better than the aforementioned Blackwash. These are professional quality stains that come in 12 Traditional and fashion colors. The stains blend to create an unlimited variety of custom colors and these translucent colors do not conceal natural wood grains or surface textures.

For more information, check with your local hobby store or head on over to Design Master's Internet site, which can be found at: www.dmcolor.com



MASTERCUT

Now has a 140-piece rotary toolset on the market that's perfect for all your rotary tool-related needs!

In this particular set, you'll see sanding applicators of all kinds, drill bits, buffers, cutters, sharpeners, polishing, sculpting, grinding - just about anything that you might need once you get into that detailed and intricate modeling/craft project.

The case can be permanently mounted to a wall right near your work bench, or can be used with its built-in carrying case that opens up and sets on your workbench near you. Whichever you prefer, this really comes in handy. We picked ours up at Costco for right around \$15.00 and we've seen them at Home Depot as well.

Case also comes with an extra three-drawer storage unit to hold many of the bits and accessories you may already have for your rotary tool.



IWATA REVOLUTION

From the folks who are known for quality airbrushes and accessories comes this latest, sure to be noted for quality, performance and value!

Iwata's Revolution airbrush, like the Iwata Eclipse models, is designed so that one tip and one needle do it all. These dual-action, internal-mix metal airbrushes are manufactured to the same precision standards as the entire Iwata Airbrush line. The Revolution airbrushes are ideally suited for beginning students, hobbyists, crafts persons and industrial use.

The Revolution airbrushes use a Teflon packing needle seal, which is impervious to solvent-based paints, and is easily replaced. There are two models available: Iwata Revolution BCR (bottom feed) and the CR (gravity feed cup—15 cc). List price: \$99.95 each. Simply put, the Revolution out performs all other airbrushes in the same price range, and continues to keep Iwata in the forefront of precision airbrush technology.

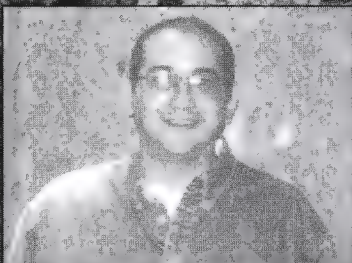
The new Iwata Revolution Airbrushes are available now at your favorite Iwata-Medea-Artool supplier. For a complete listing of the IWATA-MEDEA-ARTOOL catalog on the Web, go to www.iwata-medea.com.



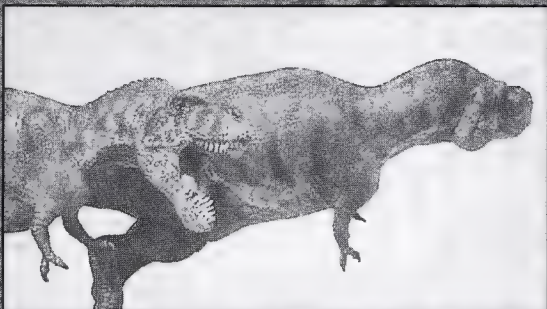
DOWN THE PREHISTORIC TRAIL



WITH MIKE FREDERICKS



Dino Profile: Maximo Salas



Thanks again for joining me down the prehistoric modeling trail. I recently interviewed Maximo Salas, prehistoric animal sculptor and resident of Mexico. In our interview, we discussed how Maximo creates his artwork and what it is like doing so south of the border. Max has been a friend (albeit long distance) for years and offers many resin sculptures for sale through Triceratops Hills Ranch's web site at: www.linkandpinhobbies.com. Check them out!

PT: *How long have you been sculpting and what got you started?*

MS: Now that's a long story. I started as a kid a loooong time ago. I was always playing with clay and plasticine, back in the 60s. Now, why prehistoric animals? Well, I grew up looking at books with the artwork of Burian, Knight, Zallinger, etc. Those books always made me wonder how life was in those long gone ages. I also remember my first visit to the Natural History museum in Mexico City. I must have been six or seven years old then. They have this magnificent reproduction of the Carnegie Diplodocus there (a present from Carnegie himself to the Mexican government back in the 1910s) as well as some great dioramas.

Perhaps the main reason was my dad and great-granddad; they taught me to read at a very young age and the books they used were all about prehistoric life. After a long period of other interests (you know, school, work, girls - those were the seventies...disco time!), I rediscovered dinosaurs thanks to the great artwork of people like Greg Paul, Mark Hallet, Bill Stout and others. You know, the dinosaur revolution of the eighties. This time I got hooked for good. I started working on sculpture and painting again, and then, around '94, got the chance to attend the SVP meeting in Seattle, thanks to an invitation from Dan LoRusso who was with the Dinosaur Society at the time. There I met Dave Alden from Saurian Studios (a great supporter of Paleoart) and also a good friend, and became more and more involved. Dave was the one who introduced me to you, remember? Around seven years ago!!!!?

PT: *Yep, more like eight years, Max. You are an architect living in Mexico, can you tell us what that's like? What's the best thing? What's the worst?*

MS: Wow, that's a good one. Mexico is a great country...the people, the traditions, the culture, the architecture, the language, not only the Spanish but also the old ones, like the Mayan or Nahuatl (I know a little bit of both) and the food!!

It's nothing like what you have up there passing as Mexican food, that's mostly Texan food, and don't get me wrong, it's good, but nothing like you may find here. The variety is just amazing, every region or state in this country has its unique cuisine.

And the country itself...here you can find magnificent deserts, rain forest, temperate forest, mountains, sometimes at driving distance from one another, and the sea! I used to live in Cancun a few years back and the Mexican Caribbean is really something!!

Now I live in Monterrey, a huge city in the Northeast, and life here is totally different from what you may find in the countryside or in more traditional parts of Mexico. Monterrey is a huge industrial center and life is more like what you may find in any big city in the US (it's even more expensive here).

On the other hand, it is sometimes hard to get material. Sculpy is not available and has to be imported, as well as casting and molding stuff, which is sometimes overpriced as high as 50% more than what you may find in the States, which makes it difficult for me to give better prices on my sculptures - something I'd love to do.

Also, times have been pretty rough. You in the US are in the middle of a recession and I know it's been hard for a lot of you folks, but down here, with ups and downs, it's what's been happening for the last twenty or so years. You know...bad government plans, economic issues, inflation, devaluations, the lot!! It's not been easy, and being a small-time designer and contractor, all the crises have really hit us hard. What's been harder

is each time I think things are going to get better, something totally out of my control happens and then it is time to start all over again. Now this September 11th situation...well, we have a proverb down

here, "when the US sneezes, we Mexicans get pneumonia."

But we keep on going and I'm sure there will be much better times for us all. There have been a lot of experiences and knowledge to be gained and now it is time to put them to good use.

PT: I know the Society Vertebrate Paleontology meeting was held recently in Mexico. Is there a lot of interest in prehistoric life in Mexico?

MS: It may not seem that way, but there is a lot of interest here. As with anywhere else, kids just love prehistoric life!! Also, there is a lot of serious research taking place in Mexico. Micropaleontology is a much looked after field of study; you know the importance of oil and natural gas extraction in a production country like mine. Also, Mexico is an important place regarding faunal exchange between North and South America, not only in the Mesozoic, but also in more recent times. There are some great workers in this field, people like Oscar Carranza, Marisol Montellanos and others.

Also, you may not know what Chibchulun is? (Mayan for "the Devil's tail - fitting, isn't it?) Not only is this huge crater here (left from the impact of the meteor that may have killed the dinosaurs), but there is a lot of evidence from the impact all over the place. Actually, the region where I live, Northeastern Mexico, is one of the few places where you can find the transition between the Cretaceous and Tertiary without any interruption (mostly marine deposits). There is a lot of research about it also.

And Dinosaurs!! You should see the places for digging dinosaurs down here, the same potential as I don't know, maybe Montana or Alberta (without the winters) and we've just started to scratch the surface. Perhaps you have heard about Rincon Colorado, near Saltillo? Well, that place is just magnificent and it's only around 40 miles from Monterrey. The new Museo del Desierto is wonderful; great people like Rene Hernandez and Rosario Gomez, among others, are working there.

You know, in Europe, or in Canada or the US, there have been studies in Paleontology for around 200 years and in Geology for much longer than that. Well, Latin America is almost brand new with amazing potential. You can see all the new discoveries in Argentina, for example!

As with anywhere, the main problem here is money, and in Mexico there is little to be spared for research and most of that goes to Archeology where most institutional studies are focused here.

PT: Would you please tell us how you go about sculpting a prehistoric animal, from square one to completion?

MS: If it's not a commission, I'm always looking for unusual stuff, animals that are under represented, or something that grabs my attention. First of all, finding information about the subject is not always an easy task here. We're kind of sideways from the main info stream, so I'm always on the hunt for good reference books and publications. In that regard, the Internet really helps. I'm constantly ask-



ing scientists for info and they have just been great sharing.

Next, to fix it all, checking measurements, doing scale drawings, etc. Most of the time, I don't do sketches for a final pose; I just let myself go while working. For the armature, I use mostly heavy gauge copper or aluminum wire (I always find plenty of pieces on the construction sites) and for the body, I use aluminum foil, working as I go to get almost the final figure.

As with almost all sculptors, my originals are made out of

SuperSculpy or another brand of oven-bankable clay. Sometimes I mix super with regular Sculpy. I find I can give much better detail that way, especially when it comes to feathers or hair. Both have to be done by hand, which is really hard work. For scaly skin, I use self-made stamps out of repliscale. Great stuff, really!

For tools, most of mine are self-made. I kind of find it easier to work that way, but I also have plenty of dentist's tools or jewelry screwdrivers, also filed down to my liking. Remember an article I wrote for Fine Scale Modeler magazine a few years back? Well, the process is pretty straightforward; it just takes practice.

Once the original is completed, I used to paint them before taking pictures, but I found that it washed some of the detail out, so I now make a mold and cast before painting and photographing. I'm still a rookie at casting and lack some of the equipment necessary to do it perfectly, but I guess I'm getting better each time. To be honest, I had one heck of a teacher, Mike Evans, who is one of the originators of the garage kit industry and a great friend also.

PT: How long does it take you to create a new sculpture? It seems you work pretty fast?

MS: I'm the kind of guy who always has to be doing something. I can't just sit and watch TV, so I keep on modeling and modeling for hours (and I don't need that much sleep either). I'm always working

on several pieces at a time, just so I don't get bored of one, and the main thing is, I just love doing new stuff. It's a lot of fun for me and that's the main reason to go on sculpting. It probably takes me around 20 straight hours to finish one figure, but I seldom have the chance to work that way.

PT: Sounds like you are just constantly working. You like to create smaller scale figures, especially 1/35, why?

MS: I also love to do larger scale figures. They can be more dramatic and in a way they're easier to work with (I really don't know how Dave Krentz does his 1/72 scale prehistorics, he must have some eyesight!!). I have done plenty of big scale stuff, mostly for private collectors and TV, but the reason to work in 1/35 is two-fold. First, that way people can compare with more usual subjects the real size of prehistoric animals, I mean, they were huge, but most people have the wrong impression and tend to expect something like Godzilla (the size of a building or a city), and comparing with, I don't know...a 1/35 scale tank, a truck or a figure model kit. You can get a better idea, and



perhaps it's easier to build a diorama or something.

The other reason is affordable prices. I know, I know, I'm not getting there yet, but I am trying. People should know the effort it takes to release new figures. Everything is expensive, from the RTV molds to the resin, and the shipping charges just keep rising down here. I have been trying to go big time with the casting and molding for quite some time now, and when it happens, prices should go down, but it's not easy to find the resources down here (money, money, always money!).

PT: *Shipping costs in the U.S. keep rising too. When I have tried sculpting, I get a lot of excess sculpt coming off my cuts that I don't know what to do with. Should I sculpt through clear plastic as some have told me?*

MS: Well, I haven't tried that yet. (Maybe I should; Mike Evans keeps "complaining" about lines on my models.) What I'm doing these days is to keep my cuts to the minimum possible and finishing the figures, at least on the seams, not with Sculpy, but with Wonder putty (another of Mike Evan's great products). That way, it's easier for me to get a cleaner figure.

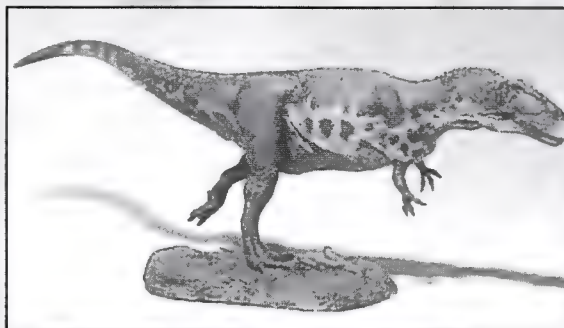
PT: *In every interview I now ask, why do you think so many of us are interested in prehistoric animals?*

MS: That's a pretty philosophical question! I really don't know, but have a few theories. In a way, dinosaurs were real monsters, but at the same time they're safe for us; they can't really hurt us. They give you a sense of awe and wonder. Another possibility, mostly with dinosaurs and Paleozoic reptiles, is that they were so different than anything we have now. It's almost like they came from outer space, yet they were here!!

About the Mega fauna...well, man evolved together with all kinds of huge animals that are no longer with us anymore; perhaps it's some sort of genetic memory. Has it not happened to you, that you are looking at some place, or view or something, and just wondering where are all the animals? Has it not happened when you are driving in the countryside, and you hear how the kids start screaming when they see a cattle ranch? In a sense, we live in an arid world. Just a few thousands years ago there were huge herds, huge predators, lumbering giants all around, in Europe, in the Americas, etc., but these days you only find that in a few places in Africa and Asia. And most of all, perhaps it's also a way to answer one of the big questions...where did we come from?

Another thing is, we're not "Nintendo kids." Most of us grew up in a world of plastic models, toys in our cereal box, etc. It was a much different age than now. People in those days did more stuff by hand; remember the yo-yo? Maybe dinosaurs were our "Pokemons," I don't know.

But anyway, it's fun. I really enjoy it and more than anything else, I love the look on my 10-year-old son, Miguel, when I finish a new figure, or when we find something interesting in the field, and I explain to him where it came from, or how many years ago it existed, etc. It's just great!!



PT: *Who are your heroes and what's your advice for up-and-coming artists?*

MS: I admire so many people's work, both old timers and living artists. That's another thing I just love about paleo art, that is, the people involved in it, most, if not all of them, are just great and many of them I consider my friends, even those I have not met in person (like yourself, for example!). There is always something you can learn from others, even those who don't share your ideas or beliefs.

It's funny how we get feedback from each other, even without knowing it. For example, Mark Hallet just told me recently how he used my Seismosaurus and Saltasaurus figures as a guide for the magnificent painting he did for National Geographic on Madagascar sauropods and crocs,

and you know, the book "Seismosaurus" by Dr. Gillette, was my main guide for doing those figures, and guess who did the art work there!!!!? Yep, Mark Hallett.

That's one of my advices for newcomers...share, share and share. It's much better to make friends than to go after each other's throats, sometimes for nothing.

The other...well, so many others have said this, but I'll say it again anyway; it's not an easy field, there's not a lot of money to be made, so don't expect to get rich. This has to be a profession of love, with work, practice and lots of lots of patience. You'll get your reward, even if it is not monetary.

PT: *I used your baby Apatosaurus and your Giganotosaurus sculptures when drawing characters in the Diniverse book series I illustrated for Random House. There! The truth is out. It helps so much to have your subject in your hand that you can turn around and see from all angles. What can we expect to see from Max Salas in the future?*

MS: This is the way it should always be, Mike; glad you could use them. Due to the time I can dedicate to sculpting these days, perhaps not as many figures as in the past, but I hope much better ones. I'm giving some serious thought to again doing a series of 1/20 scale theropods. So many new discoveries have been found about them in recent years that my original figures are now obsolete. That's another thing I love about paleo art, it keeps changing!! Maybe this time I'll include something like a predator and prey series. I don't know, I'm open to suggestions!

There are plans also to do some work together with other artists, but it'll depend on everyone's schedule. I'm sure there will be some surprises.

PT: *Thanks, buddy. I've received so many requests from readers to interview you. (I didn't want to; they made me, Ha!) I'm glad we could finally do it.*

MS: Thanks a lot for all your support and friendship, Mike, and I've always known just how smart your readers are.



HIDDEN OUTPOST

“It was far from the world's prying eyes. Hidden from the rest of the world, the pilot of the Fledermaus knew the way back to the outpost in his sleep it seemed. In fact, he felt as though he could easily place the craft on autopilot and it would simply take him there! Over the dry, arid ground he flew. He would cover the last few hundred miles in a matter of minutes and then his reconnaissance mission for another night would be over. Far below him lived the people whom he and his crew protected. Little did they know of his existence or of his missions. They were better off not knowing. Better that they lived in a happy-go-lucky existence believing that all was right with their world, than knowing that if not for him and the rest of the Protectorate, they would not know the true meaning of peace...”

A Creative Idea

When I first saw the Fledermaus, I thought, “What a cool looking kit!” This was a number of years ago and at that

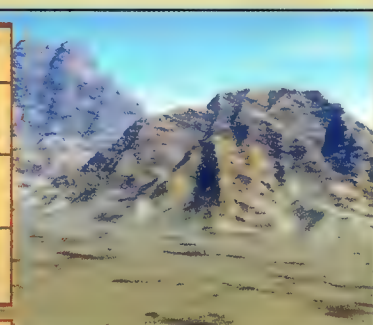
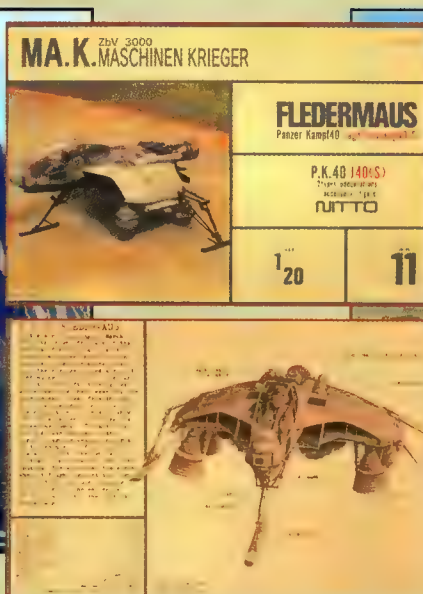
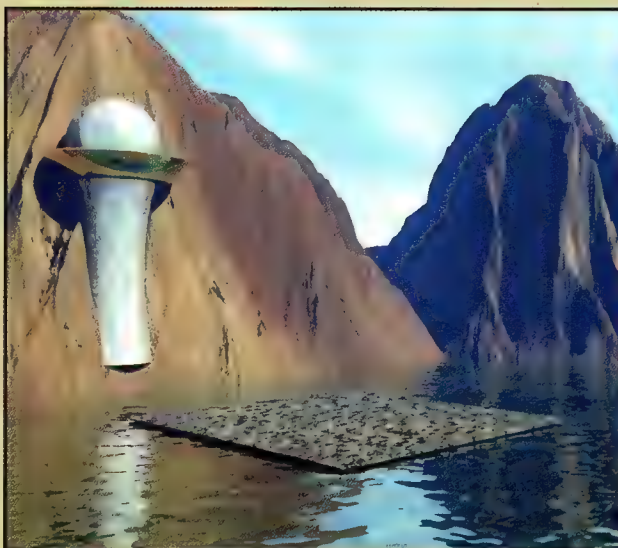
point, I knew nothing of the kit or the kit's creator. What attracted me to this particular model (and a number of the kits in the SF3D line) was the unique approach its creator has taken. It was difficult to describe Fledermaus. Was it futuristic? A remnant of the past? A combination of both?

When I was a kid, I spent time in many art classes drawing concepts like this! They had a futuristic, beyond-this-world look and appeal to them that, for me, was the most interesting aspect of these models. Because they didn't necessarily fit into a preconceived idea, they were open to interpretation. Even the painting instructions allow for a variety of renditions.

The Fledermaus is a very unique Sci-Fi ship in the SF3D line of kits, created by Kow Yokoyama © 1997. This and others in the line are essentially war machines of the 29th century as one interpretation goes. We're talking about WWIV between the Shutorial Government and the rebel-funded Mercenaries. (You know, isn't it a shame that societies are still going to be fighting 800 years from now?!)

This particular flying craft is a one-seater and kind of reminds me of something that you would see James Bond using...If he was around to fight in WWIV. According to the instructions





Two other backdrops I created and thought about using for this article.

Left: The front and back side of the Fledermaus boxart.

and box art, this craft has a high-speed propulsive sub-engine, a rear warning pulse sensor, side gear, and a host of other items that come in handy for flyer fighting.

We'll get into the building and painting of it soon, but first, I'd like to discuss the background diorama/picture on the first page of this article. I wanted to create a particular backdrop for this ship that I felt complimented it and I wanted to design it prior to actually constructing it. Enter Bryce® 5 from Corel. I had been playing with this particular computer program for a while (by downloading the free trial full program) and after getting a ton of information and tutorials from a variety of forums on the Internet as well as seeing what others could do with the program, I decided it was time for me to take the plunge and purchase it.

I went through a ton of examples before I decided on the one shown at the beginning of the first page. Some, I had added water and a platform, on which I thought I would place the finished craft. In others, I simply created a mountain setting with a lot of sand and was originally going to call this article "Desert Outpost." As things progressed, so did my concept for the final background and artwork. Ultimately, I began using the Boolean objects that came with Bryce, placing different "skins" over them, reworking this, changing that and eventually, I had the result that I was looking for as a background for my article. Now, seeing this, if I want to create the actual, physical diorama, I can do so much more easily than by just starting out and seeing what happens.

Whether you ever get a program like this or prefer Photoshop® or maybe just sticking with a pencil and paper, I can't stress enough the idea that you should probably draw your diorama out in some fashion before you begin the process of actually creating it. You'll wind up less frustrated and things will go along much smoother for you. Will Bryce or any other program replace products that come from companies like Woodland Scenics? I can't imagine it, but this program, as stated, is a great additional tool in your design arsenal and one that shouldn't be overlooked. Okay, let's move onto the Fledermaus, shall we?

The Kit

These kits, like all of the models in this line, are extremely well detailed. You will fully enjoy the fact that these models are a joy to look at because their realism is tangible. Now, bear in mind that these models are not on the cheap side either. This particular styrene kit, after import duties, etc., rang up at right around \$50 at my local hobby store, but since I had purchased a number of the

other kits in the series, I was quite confident that I would be getting a product worth the money.

There are a ton of parts that are well detailed and realistic. These types of models always seem to fair better in the injection-molding process than figures due to the fact that these kits have more flat surfaces and straighter lines. Figures often contain curved parts with texturing over the surface areas.

Let's Digress...

Dave Bengel was explaining to me more of this process. It would have been possible, for instance, to have even richer detail on many of these parts, however to do that, the number of parts themselves would have increased. At the time we were checking out the new Godzilla® kit from Polar Lights® and you'll note in some areas, like Zilla's knees, areas are almost smooth. Well, had PL chosen to do so, they could have easily had more detail and texture to those smoother areas. However, to do that, the parts would have to have been broken down into even more parts. So, instead of having two halves for the legs where the knees meet, there might have been four or six parts, which would have allowed for more detail, but then, there would have been more seams to fill. It has to do with how the part is ejected from the steel mold. If the cut, angle or curve is too great on the part itself, you either have to break the parts into more

The beginnings of the camo pattern. Note also the real brass screens used over air ducts.





parts or you remove a bit of the detail and opt for a bit less. So, the producer of an injection-molded model is always trying to walk the tightrope of keeping the model with as few parts as possible to cut down on the amount of seams, while retaining as much of the detail as possible. It truly is a unique balancing act and more power to those who create models in styrene.

Back to the Fledermaus

The instructions call for completing the figure/pilot and interior of the pilot's area before moving onto anything else. Now, as I moved through the instructions, I was always mindful of the fact that I needed to paint it. Building and painting the pilot and his interior was fine and very straightforward.

As I moved onto the other areas of the craft, I realized that I might have to stop in the middle of something to be sure that my exterior painting would not be ruined or made more difficult.

I always had the option of masking off areas on the exterior once I was ready to do the full blown paint job on the outside of the craft, so I kept that in the back of my mind.

Ultimately, I really wanted to have fun with this kit. Because of the nature of preparing each issue of this magazine, my models tend to become very assembly-line oriented and I find that I am always mindful of the fact that I will need to stop and snap some photos. That can be frustrating because it seems like when you're in the flow, you need to stop the forward movement, set up the shot and take it so that it can become part of the article.

I decided with this article that I wasn't going to try and worry too much about when I took pictures. I just wanted to work on the kit, kind of get lost in the flow and see where I would end up. As I mentioned, this is a beautifully detailed model and I wanted to be proud of it when I completed it. Because of that, there are fewer photos of the actual process in this article.

I painted the kit with a number of browns, tans and lighter colors (from the spray can) to match the background I had created for it. The camo pattern was loosely airbrushed on over the base color. You'll note in the photo on the bottom left of this page that the kit looks pretty "clean." That was taken care of by airbrushing Tamiya Smoke randomly over the entire craft. Since this paint is a gloss, I needed to hit it with Testors DullCote™ to eliminate or pull back that sheen. I was happy with the results I achieved.

Fledermaus was fun! It's a great kit of an imaginative subject. Because of the number of parts, be prepared to take your time with the kit and you may opt to not use all the parts too. Overall, the part fit was excellent. There were just a couple of areas where the top and bottom sections of wings meet where I ran into a bit of a problem. This was eliminated by removing a few of the locator pins.

This entire SF3D line includes some great Sci-Fi and if that's what you're into, then you'll want to check some of these out. Can't find them locally? Head on over to Hobby Link Japan at: <http://www.hlj.com/>

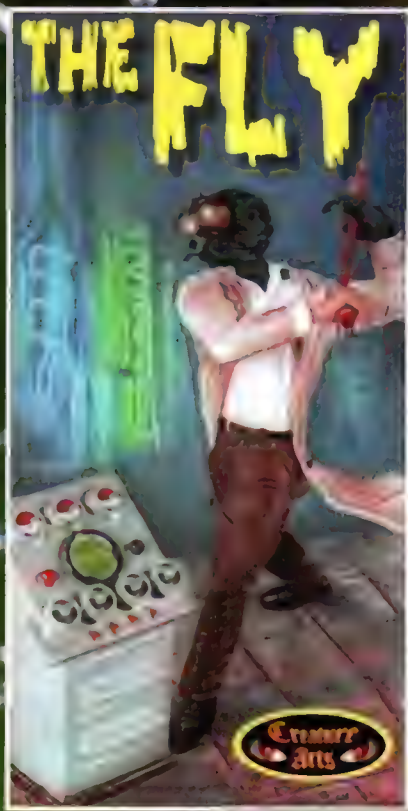


Left photo: Fledermaus is painted but not weathered. Tamiya Smoke (gloss) was airbrushed over the surface randomly to create the weathering and then will be sprayed with Testors DullCote™.



"Help Me! Help Me!"

It's All Plastic to Me with Jim Bertges



In 1958, long before he took any of his fabled voyages to the sea bottom, David Hedison (who was then known as Al) took a short trip with a little friend. When they got back, neither Al nor his little friend felt very much like himself, but they did feel a little like each other. It was, of course, the classic science fiction film "The Fly" in which Al and his pal exchanged bodily parts in a teleporter accident that presaged anything in Star Trek by nearly a decade. Now Creature Arts has created an excellent resin representation of Al in his semi-fly state.

This 1:6 scale kit was sculpted by S.M. Clark and accurately depicts The Fly as he appeared near the end of the film. The dynamic pose shows the part-man/part-insect creature in a fit of rage, as he is about to destroy the control panel to his experimental teleportation device. The kit comes with The Fly, in five parts; the two-part control panel with some nice waterslide decals for the dials and gauge faces; a fire axe; and the tiled lab floor. It also includes an excellent seven-page instruction sheet that provides detailed directions on

preparation and construction of a resin kit and color photos of the finished piece. Mention should also be made of the great box art, created by Ron Gross, that evokes memories of the glory days of Aurora. The instructions are so well written and illustrated that even a novice should have no difficulty putting this kit together.

However, there is quite a bit of cleanup involved in getting the kit ready for assembly and a motor tool is a must in order to make this process as easy as possible. The kit is well engineered and goes together with only minor putty work needed at the shoulders where the arms attach. Even though the kit is accurate, I kept seeing that shot from the film where we see multiple screaming faces of Patricia Owens in "fly-vision" in my mind and I decided I wanted my fly to have compound eyes. So, even though it wasn't in scale or accurate to the creature's film appearance, I spread a thin layer of Super Sculpey over the kit's eyes, laid a piece of clear plastic wrap over that and used a small plastic tube to make circular impressions in the



Photos: 1) The Fly with compound eyes added with Sculpey; 2) Close-up of the Fly, 3) Selected "junk" from the plastic pack rat boxes, 4) Front panel of the computer prior to painting, 5) The full computer almost ready to paint, 6) The "liquid nitrogen" tanks prior to painting.

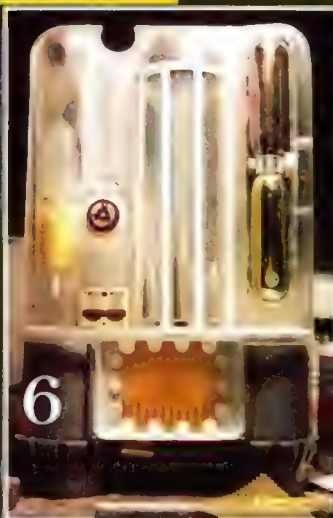


clay, giving the eyes the appearance I wanted. That wasn't the only addition I made to this kit though...no, that was just the beginning.

The kit comes with an interesting enough base, but I thought it might be fun to have more "mad lab" equipment surrounding this demented human/insect hybrid, expanding the scene and giving him more junk to smash. The kit control panel was a good start and it gave me a design style that I could apply to the other equipment. I didn't want to actually recreate the machinery used in the movie; it seemed like it would be more fun to make a bunch of 50s sci-fi style goodies based on my imagination. So, the search was on through my boxes of pack-ratted plastic odds, ends, gimcracks, cast-offs, doo-dads and just plain trash to find suitable parts for my creation. I found old plastic packaging, odd GI Joe parts, discarded pens, broken bottle caps and a conglomeration of other stuff I've collected over the years. The two prize pieces for this particular project were a plastic box that was once filled with makeup items from Clinique and a respiration tester left over from my wife's surgery. These became the housing for the Fly's computer and a complex of metallic tanks. The search had gone so well that I decided to make the teleportation chamber as well and went to the store to purchase a medium sized, straight sided, Rubbermaid storage jar. Then I went to work.

The Computer

Fortunately for me, the only part of a computer that



really shows is the outside box and not the complex innards. All I had to do was create a reasonable looking control panel with some dials, switches and gauges. I did find a plastic panel that had some simulated vents, so I removed those and fitted them into rectangles cut into the sides of my plastic box. Raiding my spare parts box, I grabbed some 1/25-scale car wheels, some rings from a discarded ball-point pen, two wheels from a broken GI Joe toy, eight plastic balls and the spherical ends from some pick-up sticks. I cut holes in the box front to accommodate the car wheels and some smaller ones for the pen parts. A rectangle was cut into the top end of the front, which was backed with a smaller plastic box, the GI Joe wheels then became the computer reels inside. I framed the opening with some Plastruct strips and, after painting, installed a piece of clear plastic to complete the window. On my computer I made a number of gauge faces that fit inside the car wheels and covered each of them with a circle of clear plastic. A strip of .060 styrene covered the word "Clinique" on the front of the box and holes were drilled to fit the eight plastic balls, which became dials. The pick-up stick ends became switches and were installed on another rectangle of styrene that went below the dials. The whole computer box was attached to a smaller, clear candy box to elevate the whole thing.

For paint I decided to go with white for both the computer and the control panel. It kind of made them look like kitchen appliances, but it fit with the 50s



Above: Completed and painted, the kit-provided control panel, "liquid nitrogen" tanks and computer. Below: The teleporter "cage" made from Plastruct tubes, square stock and a round doohickey on top.

The Tanks

I've had my eye on this particular piece of plastic for several years. It was originally a respiratory device to help my wife increase her lung capacity after back surgery. She has long since recovered and, like the pack rat I am, I saved this interesting looking plastic thingy. For purposes of this model, I'm calling this a complex of liquid nitrogen tanks for cooling the teleportation chambers. Details added to this piece included Plastruct strips, old CO2 cartridges (empty), parts from some Star Wars candy containers, the vac-u-formed packaging from ink-jet cartridges and some odds and ends from the spare parts box. Once it got a coating of metallic Pewter paint and a little shading, it was ready to become an official part of the Fly's lab.

Teleportation Chamber

To be accurate, I really should have built two of these, but I think one gets the point across nicely. The basic structure of the chamber is based on that clear plastic jar from Rubbermaid I bought at Wal-Mart. In the movie, the chamber resembled a phone booth and I wanted something a little more sci-fi looking. I envisioned a structure around my clear enclosure, so I bought six 5/16" Plastruct tubes to build the external framework. Other parts included the base from a plastic planter, a piece of Masonite cut to fit inside that base as a floor and a clear planter holder that I saw at the market for fifty cents. Using a cut-off wheel in my motor tool, I carefully removed the threaded top portion of the jar. I used pieces of low tack masking tape to work as straight edges for cutting both the top and bottom of the jar as well as creating a door in the side. I fitted the jar onto the planter base and put the clear planter holder on top of that. This gave me the basic shape and allowed me to cut the Plastruct tubes to the proper lengths and angles to create the framework. I measured around the base and drilled evenly spaced holes to accommodate the tubes. There was a lot of test fitting and reshaping of angles in order to get all the tubes to line up properly and feed into a small plastic cylinder at the top of the structure. Once these parts were all glued into place, I cut cross-members from some square plastic stock and glued them into place. Then there was a bit of putty work and sanding

involved in order to get everything into proper shape. At this point the spider-like outer structure was a separate part from everything else for purposes of painting.

I gave all the structural parts a coating of silver and black, using the Hilber Graf, two-handed spray can method. I used the cut-off wheel to cut the door in the side of the chamber and used thin Plastruct channeling to frame both the door and the opening. The frames were hand-painted with silver. The door was attached with superglue and was intentionally left partially open. Once everything was assembled, I cleaned off the clear plastic with rubbing alcohol to remove both my fingerprints and masking tape residue.

The Floor

I had originally planned to use the kit supplied, tiled floor for this piece, but it was just too small to accommodate the equipment I had made, so I was on the lookout for another suitable base to attach everything to. As luck would have it, I found a discarded computer stand at work that had an interesting shape and seemed large enough for my purposes. I took it home and started arranging all my elements for the best presentation. It turned out that the best arrangement was a bit too large for this base as well, but I was able to cut an extension from an old piece of shelving and made everything work. I painted the whole thing to resemble concrete and once all the equipment was in place, I added some cables to complete the scene. The cable was actually a piece of red insulated wire. I sprayed one side of it black and once it dried I chucked it into my hand drill, gripped the other end tightly with a pair of pliers and spun it until it produced an interesting spiral of black and red. The final step was to place The Fly himself into the proper position so it looks like he's ready to smash something with that axe.

Although a lot of work and planning went into this strange creation, what I've done here really qualifies more as an elaborate base than a diorama. Going by the definition that a diorama tells a story and a base is created to give a kit context and background, my work here really adds no more story to the kit than was there in the first place. This kit is dynamic and accurate enough to the movie on its own that it didn't need my fiddling to enhance its storyline. What I did was to simply create a more elaborate setting for the Fly to do his work in. I hope that this will serve as a bit of inspira-



9



Photos: 9) All the components for the teleporter; the clear chamber (the tape acts as a straight edge for cutting), the clear top section, the base with masonite floor and the "cage," 10) Almost everything assembled. That little doodad on the left, next to the Ambroid bottle, is the "beam generator" that goes inside at the top of the teleporter.

tion to our readers to take a few additional steps to enhance those baseless, stand-alone figure kits with a little something extra.



10



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FROM
THE
LAIR
OF THE
Craftbeast
With
Bill Craft

ATRAGON vs. MANDA



Resin versus styrene. Here we have a happy blending of both materials in the form of a great kit from a company called Fujimi of Japan. Now, taking in mind that my understanding of the Japanese language is not at all good, I do believe the title of this kit is called "Atragon, the Flying Super-sub," which is also the title of the film on which this kit is based.

Originally released as a stand-alone styrene kit with a simple base showcasing the sub, one of those creative types over there in Japan decided to add, in resin, the monster Manda and a base to the sub, hence creating a stunning diorama.

"Atragon" was a Toho film made in 1964 by the same team that gave us the classic Godzilla movies.



I had to show you guys the stunning illustrated box art for this kit.

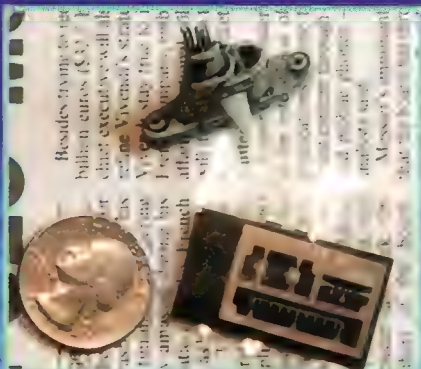
In a nutshell, mankind is menaced by the undersea kingdom of Mu and the flying super-sub, Atragon. It's sent down there to do battle. Along the way they encounter Mu's God-monster, Manda.

Okay, enough about that. Let's get ready to crash dive into this kit.



Once all the parts are laid out, you will notice a few extra pieces left over when you have completed this kit due to the fact that the sub was once a stand-alone kit and the parts were not necessary for the current conversion.

The styrene sub part of this kit absolutely killed me. There are so many small parts that I almost went blind. Next to the quarter are stamped metal parts.



I tried unsuccessfully to utilize these parts, but in the end I had to abandon them.

Just being honest with you guys here.



With the top of the sub assembled, I began to assemble the upper hull sections.



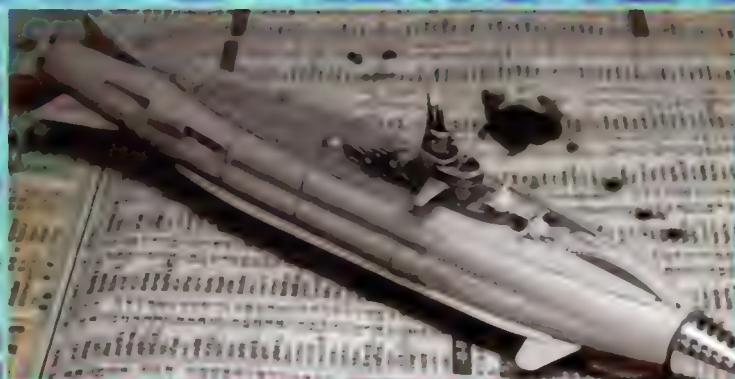
The Atragon had a lot of pieces that were designed to be working, movable parts. I decided to glue all these movable parts in fixed positions.



The top and bottom hulls of the sub are now ready to put together. A metal bore is included in the kit for the front of the sub.



The sub is now built and ready for rendering.



I antiqued the sub with black stain and wiped the excess off toward the rear to give the ship a nice motion-weathered effect.



Moving on to Manda, I first attached the head to the first section of the neck as well as the upper mouth and tooth section.



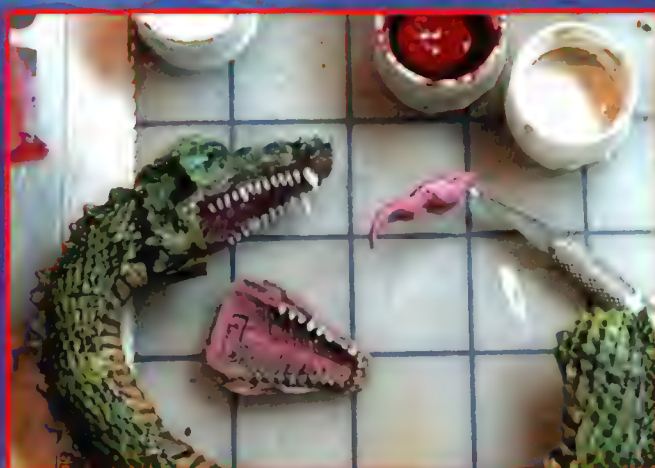
All of the Manda sections were then antiqued with black stain.



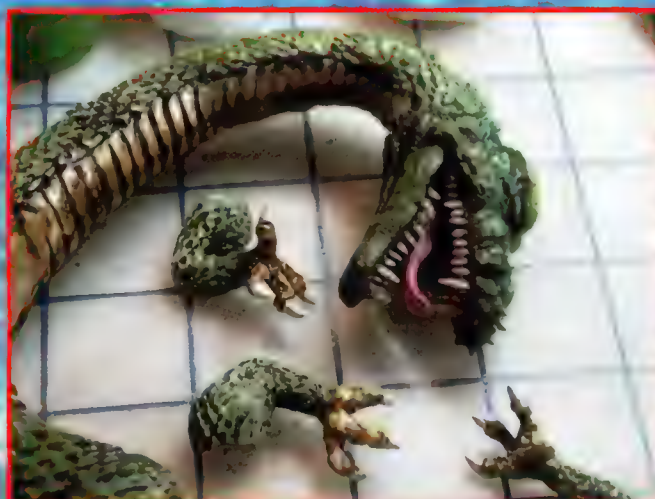
Golden's Transparent Green was then airbrushed on the parts. This was the base color.



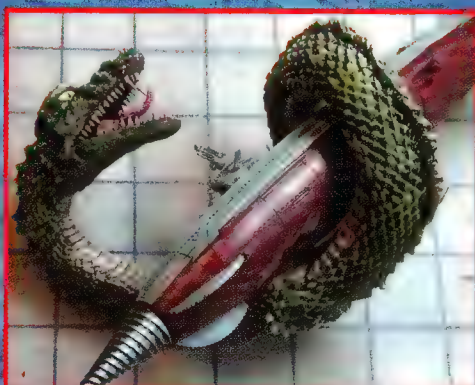
Golden's Transparent Blue was then applied over the green, followed by Transparent Yellow Oxide on the underbelly sections.



I then rendered the mouth and tooth sections using pinkish-red for the flesh areas and bone white for the teeth.



Manda's scales were then drybrushed with green and white to bring out the highlights.



The first two sections of Manda were then glued together around the Atragon.



The remaining sections were then carefully wrapped around the sub.



Manda's claws and feet were attached last, grappling at the hull of the sub.

The base was antiqued black and drybrushed with shades of blue and green. the lettering was rendered red with transparent shading grey added for accent purposes.

The sub was rendered using a light coat of Transparent Blue over the grey, upper hull section. Silver accents were added to the ship's guns as well as the side saw blades.



Going back to the head, I attached the four horns and two side tendrils.



So, there you have it. A really nice blending of styrene and resin. This was by no means an easy kit to assemble. A lot of patience is needed here. Maybe I'm just getting too old or something.

This is a definite must-have for all you Kaiju fans out there. The kit sold very well, so be diligent in trying to hunt one down if you feel the need to have it.

MORE

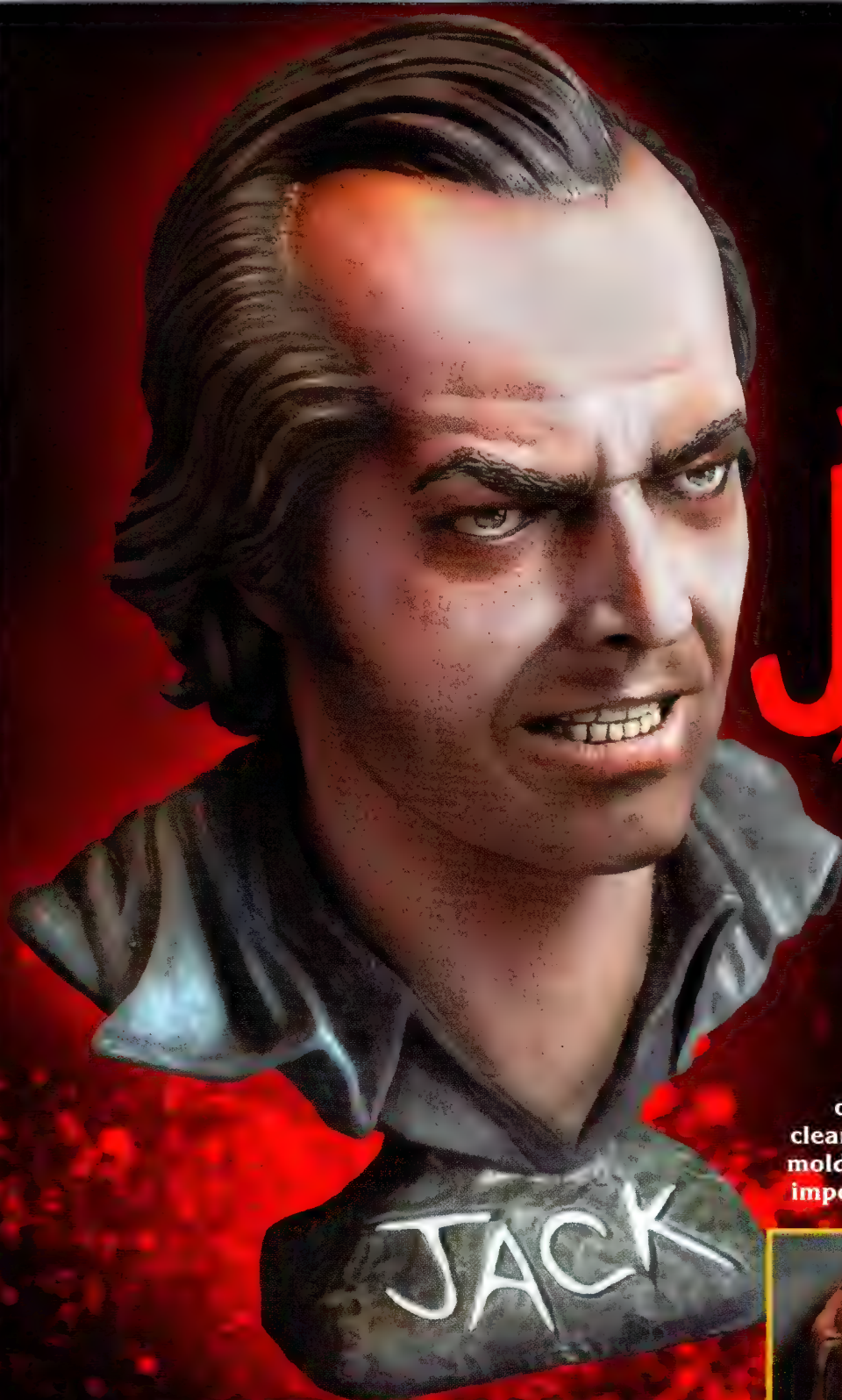
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THE
LAIR**

With
Bill Craft

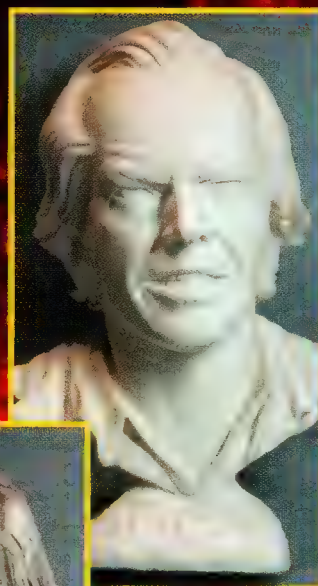


Here's Jack!

title design by **Leslie Rivera**

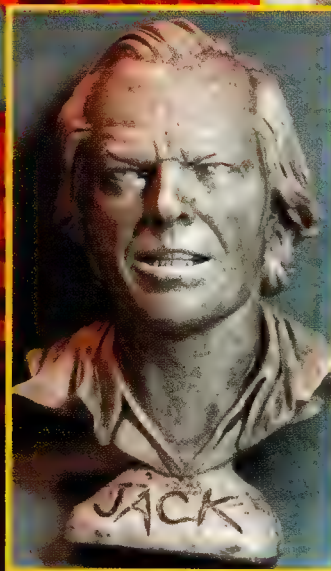


The
raw kit
completely
cleaned of any
mold lines and
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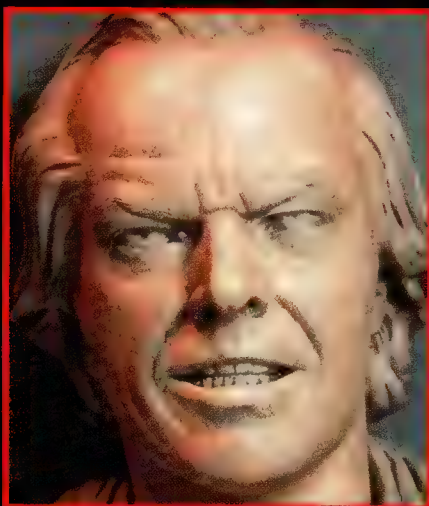


Welcome to another adventure in achieving natural skin tones kids. I have chosen for this excursion into the human pigment, a new bust that is simply entitled, "Jack." Jack was sculpted with exquisite detail by Mark Alfrey. The bust is about 12 inches tall and is hollow cast resin.

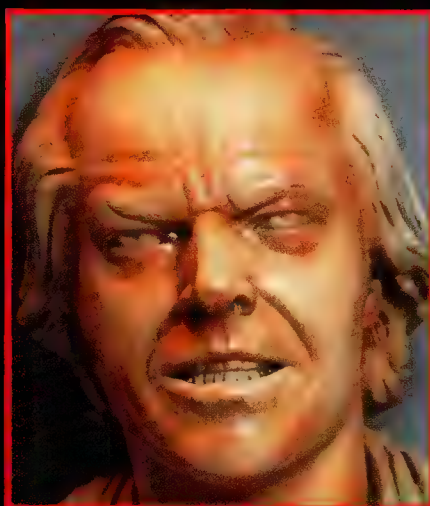
"Jack" is obviously actor Jack Nicholson. We all know that Jack has portrayed many odd characters over his vast career, but the one that stands out the most to me is his role in "The Shining." A man who is already at the verge of insanity that is pushed to the limits.



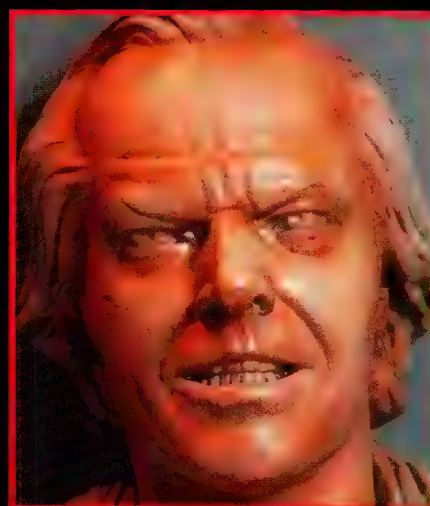
The bust is given the once-over with my homemade stain to fill in all the details. Check out the TMR website for detailed info on how to make the stain.



The first color I applied was Badger Color's Opaque Flesh. This was done with an airbrush. The color went over the entire flesh area.



I then applied Golden's Transparent Red Oxide into the crevices and did a light misting of the color over the Flesh.



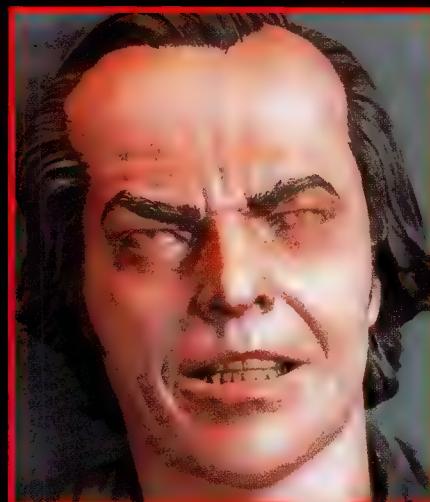
Next I airbrushed Golden's Transparent Quinacridone Red very lightly over the entire piece.



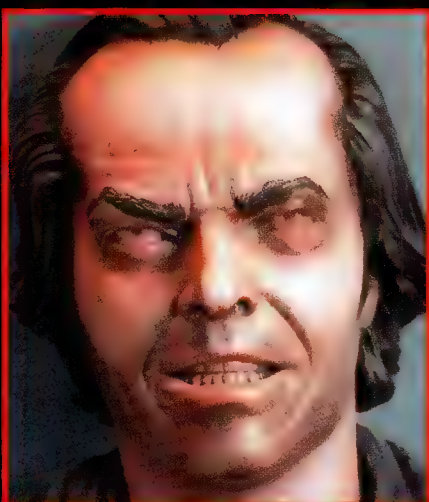
I then airbrushed pure white, that was diluted down, gently misting the color over the entire skin area to blend all the colors softly.



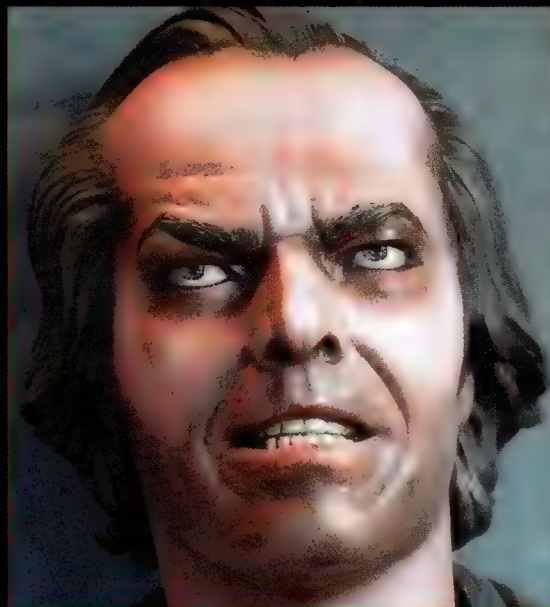
Jack's hair was rendered black. His shirt was rendered in a blue-grey. The base was given a treatment of green that was splotted with black.



The shirt and base were then drybrushed white. The hair was streaked with a light drybrushing of white.



I then applied Golden's Transparent Shading Grey around the eyes and hairline. I also gave Jack a five o'clock shadow.



All that was left at this point to was to finish up the eyes, teeth, mouth and the lettering on the base.

This is a wonderful bust. For someone who usually prefers an entire figure kit, I have been amassing quite a collection these days.

For more information and availability contact:
Creature Features at
818 • 842 • 9383



Questions or comments:
craftbeast@yahoo.com

Todd McFarlane Knows How To...

Grab Them by Their Eyeballs!

with Jim Bertges



Throughout his professional career, Todd McFarlane has been an innovator, an instigator and a bit of a revolutionary. There are few things he has done where he has not left a significant impact, made substantial improvements or even changed completely. Todd's work for Marvel Comics on the Spider-man title from 1988 to 1991 is still looked on by fans as a pinnacle of creativity for the wall crawling superhero. When Todd left Marvel to form his own comic book company with several other comics creators, Image Comics became the leader that other independent comics companies had to follow. Without the success of Image, companies like Dark Horse, Top Cow and many other smaller publishers would probably not exist as they do today. In 1994 Todd once again forced an entire industry to reexamine the way it did business when he founded Todd McFarlane Toys and introduced the first Spawn action figures based on his own comic book creation. He showed the toy industry that action figures didn't have to be bland, monochromatic, nearly featureless lumps of plastic in order to sell and be profitable. He not only caught the attention of the toy industry, he also grabbed action figure fans by the eyeballs and showed them what they had been missing. And that is what brings us all together here today, Mr. McFarlane has kindly consented to take some time from his hectic schedule to let us in on what it takes to create and run such an innovative and successful toy company in today's market.

Because his toys were such a radical change from everything that had been produced previously and because they became so successful so quickly, the question is why didn't anyone make these kinds of changes before? Todd explained that one quite modestly. "People had so many years to beat me to the punch. I don't know what caused them to leave an opening so late in the game, but..." He went on to describe the thought process he put into creating his company and his toys in the way he did. "It was simply that we as collectors and modelers and fans of anything, when we see something we like but the results aren't up to speed, then we always sort of say they could have done that better. Or the more egotistical of us might say, 'I can do that better!'"

"I think we do that when we watch movies. You come out and say that could have been better. You may not know how to make it better, but you know it didn't reach the level of your expectations. I know that toys were very simplistic and plasticky and I wondered why they couldn't look like statues and models. When I was a younger kid, I used to build them. I wondered why the toys looked so stiff...in hindsight I know why, if they're flat, you can fit more in a box. Or you can make smaller packaging or save shipping costs. When they're bent over and have body language, they take up more space. Now, from a business standpoint I know that's why those publicly traded companies who have to maximize profits did all those things. It all makes sense; if the toys stand up straight,



you can fit more in a box; you don't do a lot of detail, you save money; you don't paint them that much, you save money. Everything's about the money. They were maximizing their profits and I was new to the business so I went the opposite way. Where the big companies would say, 'How much money do we need to make? Then, here's the budget,' then give it to the creative people. I did the opposite, I went to the creative people and said, 'Build it,' and when we were done, 'How much do we need to charge to breakeven?' I let the price almost come last instead of dictating what should be done up front."

As with any innovator or leader, there come the inevitable followers or, for want of a better term 'copycats' who see success and quickly imitate it, hoping to make the magic happen for themselves. Todd's view of those who have capitalized on his innovations are those of a true industry leader, he welcomes the competition for the challenges it brings him and for the benefits it brings to his customers. "It's good for the consumer over all if somebody wants to pay attention and upgrade the product. I find it amusing and disheartening that it took this long. In all honesty, I don't think I'm doing anything that couldn't have been done by anybody else who had a little bit of

foresight into what they were doing. Some of the 'copycats' that are doing it best are some of the smaller companies that don't have the bureaucracy to go through. Ultimately it's good for competition. If people are going to start using some of our tricks, then we've got to start coming up with some new tricks. We have to keep kicking ourselves in the butt by thinking 'All they're doing is repeating what we did last year, here's what we'll do this year.' I've even seen the big companies taking a page out of our notebook. Anytime that the bar gets raised on the product for good reasons or bad reasons, it's good for the consumer."

However, the nature of the business he's in isn't lost on Todd. He knows that innovation can only count for so much with the public and his competitors aren't far behind him, gobbling up his ideas as quickly as he can generate them. Todd's idea is to go beyond what his competitors would do and offer the public something unexpected. "The toy business as a whole is one of the best at knocking off stuff. If you've got a Tomagochi that's hot, then you get a bunch of quasi-Tomagochis. If there are Cabbage Patch dolls and there's Garbage Pail

Continued Next Page

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kids. We just live in that world. You still have to have the product. You can build and insure your product if you've got the name Star Wars on it because the brand is so strong. I knew when we came in that ultimately we were the new kids on the block and we weren't going to get the big licenses so we literally had to build a better toy. That was all I had to stand on and then cross your fingers and hope the public will go, 'I get that and all that and it's all about the same price as the thing next to it.' The only thing I'd lose on is that the thing next to it was Harry Potter and you get blown out of the water with the big brand names. I never tried to go that route anyway. We tried to do the Spawn and monster stuff before we expanded into other licensed areas."

Nothing passes through McFarlane Toys without Todd's approval. Even with numerous projects and enterprises vying for his attention at all times, Todd wants to give all of his operations the attention they deserve. Even so, it's hard to believe that someone as busy as Todd is would have time to oversee all the aspects of a toy company as well. He doesn't hesitate to stop that thought dead in its tracks. "The reason I'm so busy is because I am so involved in the whole process. I was even more involved in the beginning because I was trying to teach the sculptors what it was I needed. So, fast-forward seven or eight years to where we are now and I don't have to teach them as much because they understand it. They're thinking 'OK before we even send it to Todd, we know what Todd's going to say, so here's what we'll do.'"

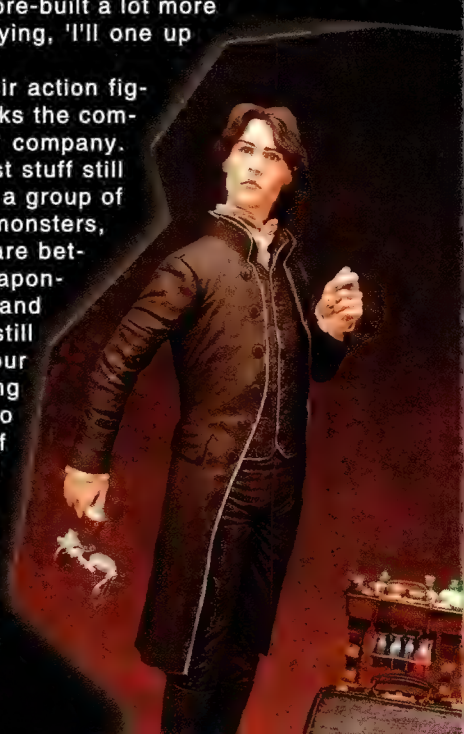
Licensing and design are other important aspects of the business that deeply involve Todd. As with all the facets of McFarlane toys, decisions begin and end with him. "In terms of going after

licenses, probably ninety-five percent of the time it's me going to my licensing people saying, 'Here's what I want, go and get it.' The other five percent is suggestions from other people about video games or music or other fields where I'm not as well versed. When we get into the design stuff, I oversee every phase. That's the next thing I have to do today, I'm going over three more toys. I don't have to oversee the design as much in the sports lines, but with sports I'm the guy who picks all the figures. I'm not just an artist, I'm also the biggest sports fan in the company. There's no one in the company who knows sports as well as I do. If it's a license like Alien or an in-house one, then we come up with concepts or themes on paper, then we put them into a pink clay. We use a clay that's very malleable and that's the point; before we put in any detail or textures or any of the stuff that makes it McFarlane, we get the body language. It's no sense putting all the chain mail before we get the stance we want. You can put on all that chain mail, but if the guy looks stiff, you're only halfway there. So, we use a couple of steps to get the body and then we discuss how we're going to dress the body. Then we go to the next level, which is adding all the detail to it."

Since Todd is known first and foremost as an artist, the thought occurs that, perhaps there are times when he wants to get his hands on the clay and demonstrate some of his ideas. "Yeah, at times. But I'm in Phoenix and my sculptors are in New Jersey and I do all of it via video conferencing, so I can't physically grab it. So, what I have to do is stand in front of the camera...I do a lot of posing, I do a lot of acting and gestures. I've also got an overhead camera so I can switch from the camera being on me to the overhead. I can do a doodle or a sketch to say here's what the hand looks like and I need the hand to look like this. Or sometimes I can show it on screen with my hand and say here's my hand see how I've got the knuckles going like this? At other times I have to do a drawing. Like I said, we've done this system so long that they've become mind readers in advance. They not only give it to me pre-built a lot more without me having to make too many comments, but they're actually surprising me saying, 'I'll one up you, Todd...you think you're so damn good.'"

Many companies in the toy industry depend upon freelance sculptors to create their action figures. The freelancer is given an assignment, leaves and comes back with what he thinks the company is asking for. This is another area where McFarlane differs from the usual toy company. Todd looks at things a little differently. "The vast majority of work is in-house. The best stuff still comes from in-house, unlike traditional methods where very few of toys are handled by a group of people. We have some guys that are unbelievable at detail, other guys are good at monsters, other guys are good at bodies and others are good at human likenesses. Some guys are better at doing men than women. Some people know how to do wrinkles and others do weaponry. I did comic books, but I didn't write and pencil and ink and letter and color and edit and staple...I didn't do it all. We know the skills our guys are pretty strong at, but they still need somebody to come in and flesh it out. Not too many times do we say, here's your project and when you're done we make it. Unfortunately, that's what ends up happening with a lot of freelancers because they don't have the McFarlane-itis in them. We try to get it to about eighty percent with them and then we bring it in-house and finish it off with all the tricks we know. For the most part, I like to pull the freelancers in-house and say, 'You need to be here.'"

"I could show you instances of people who have worked for us on a freelance level then went off and did other projects; you wouldn't even be able to tell it was the same guy. We have a different set of rules and a different way of doing things. I'd even be so cocky as to say that all these guys turned out their best work for us. That's one



thing that other companies will never be able to duplicate is the overall mind-set and that the guy who's leading the charge is also one of the better artists in the group. In the beginning they were more concerned about 'how do we meet Todd's expectations' and now it's 'how do we beat those expectations'? They come up with stuff now that's like...wow...I didn't think you could get any more detail in a figure. And they're coming to me saying, 'Look what I put on the bottom of his shoes!' All I can say to them is 'Wow, God bless ya.'

Taking action figures in directions they've never been in before has become McFarlane Toys' hallmark since they began. One of those surprising directions was McFarlane's line of music figures, which has included such rock luminaries as the Beatles, Jim Morrison and Metallica. It was a gamble that paid off for Todd and he explained why he took the risk, "It's all pop culture that we do. Most people are involved in most of the same areas. We all watch TV, play some video games, see movies, listen to music and we read books. We live in a star-driven society so music wasn't much of a stretch, given that we were making nontraditional toys and were trying to sell them in a nontraditional store. So, we wondered, how do we get our toys into music stores? The answer was to do the Beatles and KISS instead of doing Spawn and Austin Powers. That worked for us; KISS was the first set and the Beatles were second and then we just started spinning out all the others. I'd say that music figures are more difficult to pick. Do you go for the more established guys like Metallica, who might not be the current flavor of the month? Or do you go for the current hot guys who, by the time you get around to them, might not be hot any more. Or do you go back and do Janis Joplin and make them too old so younger kids can't relate to them. We've got a couple of others we're negotiating with, but not everyone wants to be immortalized in plastic. But as we do more and I'm able to show more, I think we're able to come up to them and show that these are not stupid little toys. You know, you say 'toy' to people and there's a stereotype, you say 'action figure' and there's a stereotype. We run into that with a lot of agents and managers too and they say 'My guy's above that.' Then we show them some of the stuff and they go, 'Wow, that's not what I thought it would look like.'"

Music figures aren't the only "different" choices Todd has made for action figures, there were others that surely made toy buyers scratch their heads in wonder. The three hockey playing brothers from the movie Slap Shot and the beer swilling Mackenzie Brothers characters from the old, Canadian SCTV comedy program were unusual figures, but their detail and presentation was up to the typical McFarlane standards. Hockey fan Todd tells why he decided to make those figures, "I'm Canadian, and being a Hockey fan is a default. Those are those kinds of things where every once in a while you have to be Fidel Castro. You say, 'It's my damn company, this is what I want and we're gonna do it. And I don't care if anybody buys it. We're just gonna do it.' I won't say it was the most prudent business move, but every once in a while I'll pull out the ace of 'it's my damn company and I'll drive it into the ground any way I see fit.' That's where that came from. We weren't able to get into sports at that time, so how could we do quasi-sports? So, we did stuff from sports movies. I thought 'Slapshot, that's cool. And it's Canadian, that's cool.'"

However, the unusual nature of some of McFarlane's product is beginning to work to its own advantage in that certain retailers seek out the strange and unusual side of things, while others feel they must shy away from anything out of the ordinary and stick to the traditional. At one time that had McFarlane producing "clean" variants for some of the larger retailers, but that all seems to be changing. "It sometimes comes down to that, but the economy has gone in a different direction so that the big guys who used to take some of that risqué stuff are backing away from it. They just want the no-brainer stuff, they're really enthused about our sports product, but the don't want to take a look at the monster stuff and for sure not the Tortured Souls stuff. That sort of liberates you in that you don't have to make a watered-down version of anything just to be able to get it on a certain shelf. We have product that we know is mass appeal and we have the monsters and horror and we can go balls out on it and do it right. We're finding we have two kinds of clients, those who want the 'nice' stuff and those who want anything but the nice stuff. Those are the guys who say, 'Wal-Mart doesn't want it, but we want it twice as much.' They know it's going to be limited, they don't have to be price sensitive and they're not competing with the big boys. Everybody has a different clientele that they have to accommodate. They don't really care about basketball, but they really want Tortured Souls."

Of course, creating lines of action figures isn't actually Todd's first brush with licensing. There was a time when he was the guy selling the license for his creations to someone else and the result was Spawn model kits. As a modeling magazine, the discussion must turn to models at some point. Todd graciously spoke about his involvement in those early kits. "I gave the license out and someone else did the sculpts and they put the package together. I had to approve it, but I wasn't in the business at that point. But they were a good starting point. I was trying to get flair of body dynamics and there was the cape. You've got to take advantage of what you've got. If you can create a frozen moment in a statue, you've got to do



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Italeri...

has some new ones available through Testors/Model Master.

Master.

From left to right, clockwise: Gaul Warriors in 54mm (1:32) 16 unpainted figures, retailing for \$14.50. Includes spears and shields.

British Light Dragoons in 1:72 scale is shown next and includes 24 unpainted figures retailing for \$8.00 (12 horses and 12 soldiers).

Lastly, French Hussars in 1:32 scale (54mm) from the Napoleonic Wars includes 16 unpainted figures (8 soldiers and 8 horses) retailing for \$14.50. Figures are one-piece each and simply need to be painted.

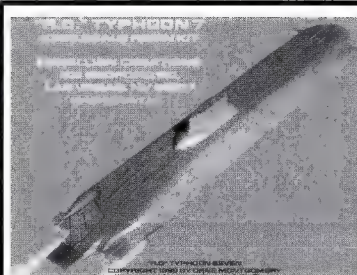
Find out more about their full line by logging onto the following URLs on the Internet: www.testors.com or www.italeri.com



N & T Productions...

has new ones for you. The Scarecrow is being released for £59.99 as a Painted piece and £34.99 as a kit. Also available is Man-Bat.

For more information, contact: Trevor Dixon - Cave, 19 Marina Drive, South Shields, Tyne & Wear, NE33 2NH ENGLAND Tel/ Fax + 44 (0) 191 456 3741 • <http://www.nt-productions.com/>



Rebellion Creations...

is offering their version of the Typhoon 7 in 1:350 scale (24 inches) resin kit. \$50.00 plus s/h.

For more information, please contact them at: Rebellion Creations, 531 Bedford Rd, Las Vegas NV 89107. You can also view their products in the 'Net by heading on over to:

<http://www.coam.net/~rebellion/>

Earthbound Studios...

is showing off a few new ones! The Creature bust by Casey Love. Kit is one part, 8 1/2" tall and retails for \$65 + \$5 s/h and next is number four in the "BIG HEAD SERIES," Hideous Sun Demon. Sculpted by Steve West, bust is 6 parts, 16" tall and retails for \$145 + \$15 s/h. The Base and flame are cast in an amber clear resin so they can be lit. Invasion Of The Saucer-Men is also shown. Kit includes 2 - 6" figures, 14 parts, sculpted by Barsom and sells for \$80 + \$5 s/h. Get yours today from:

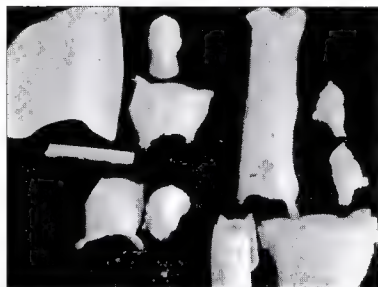
Earthbound Studios, PO Box 1833, Battle Ground WA 98604, Tel: 360.263.8535 • earthboundstudios@yahoo.com



Replacement Parts...

for the recently released Superman, Batman and Robin kits! These resin parts include Superman's cape, chestpiece, head and nameplate. Batman comes with front of tree (w/nameplate), owl, head and chest. Robin comes with head and front torso piece. Batman set is \$25. Superman set is \$25. Robin set is \$8

All three for \$50 and all prices include shipping in the US. Will ship overseas but email for shipping. Payment can be sent to: **Scott Johansen, 7733 W. Floral Ct., Frankfort, IL 60423, E-mail: SRJ823@aol.com**



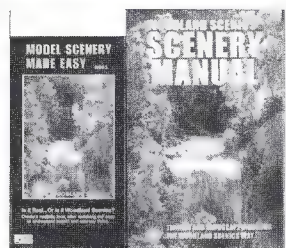
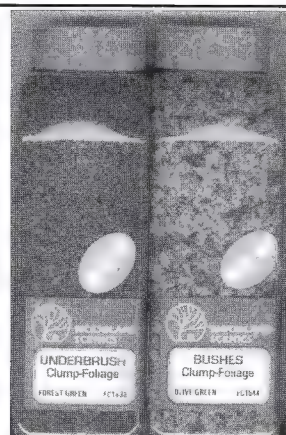
Mojo Resin...

presents a 120mm scale Boy Wonder for 25.00 retail.

Available now from: **bigkahu-na69@hotmail.com**

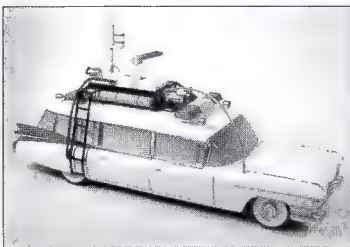
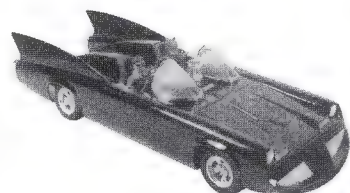
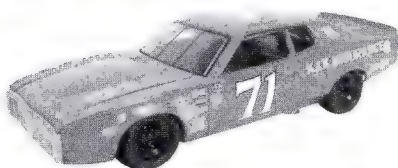
Woodland Scenics...

is showing off a few new ones! "Model Scenery Made Easy" video, shown below. This video is a comprehensive, detailed account of scenery modeling. It was skillfully produced for every level of modeler. Learn to do scenery the easy way. Next up, is Woodland Scenics Scenery Manual. The latest revision of the most popular scenery manual available includes various tips, techniques, ideas and instructions for using more than 600 products. Anyone can create model scenery and this manual will tell you and show you how. Also new are the Underbrush and Bushes Clump Foliage. For more info on these and their other products, check them out at: **www.woodlandscenics**



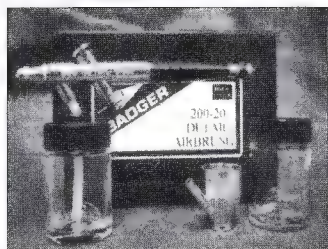
Polar Lights...

has provided us with pictures of built-up kits that will soon emerge from the assembly line! The Batplane is the old Aurora kit, reproduced for us in glorious detail. The Batmobile from the 60s comic book, along with a brand new Ecto-mobile from the Ghostbusters and DeLorean from Back to the Future. These last two vehicles are being produced in snap modes. Lastly, a tiny diecast cousin to the larger size styrene kit, the Scooby Doo Mystery Machine. For more information, check out their website at: **www.polarlights.com**



Resin Crypt...

has purchased the entire line of Resinators kits and will be re-releasing them. A number of kits are being reworked and some are available now, like the Glenn Strange Frankenstein Tribute (15" tall in ten resin parts), sculpted by Randy Bowen and Monster Rabbit (22" tall in 16 resin parts), by Joy & Tom Studios. For more information on these and other planned releases, contact them at: **Resin Crypt, 7 Normandy Terrace, West Orange, NJ 07052** or via E-mail at the following address: **resincrypt@worldnet.att.net**



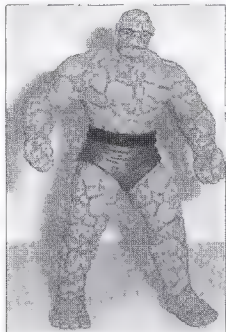
Badger Airbrush...

announces the 200-20 Single Action detail airbrush. Provides ultimate detail for precision finishes. SRP is \$76.00. Find out more from: **www.badgerairbrush.com**

Creative Designs & Castings...

releases their newest kit, Grimm Reality. This one-part, high-quality resin kit measures seven inches tall.

Will retail for \$35.00 plus \$6 s/h and fully painted versions are available for \$50.00 plus \$6 s/h. Contact them at: **Creative Designs & Castings, 800 Satin Leaf Circle, Ocoee, FL 34761**





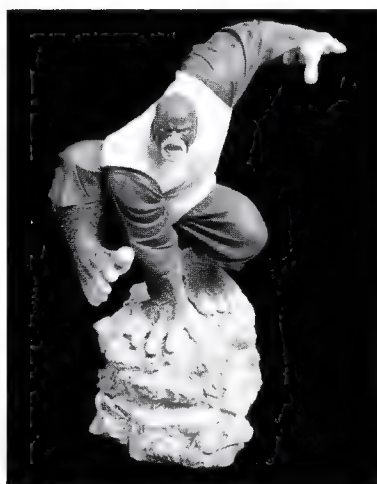
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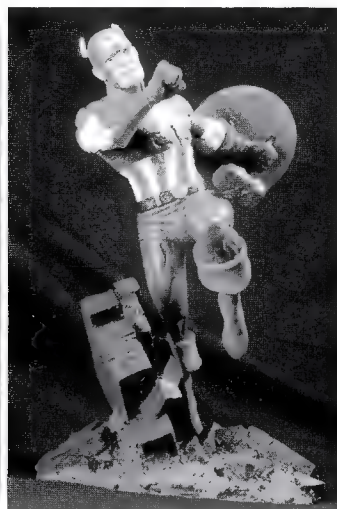
To order any product listed here, please check with your local comic book shop or visit Diamond Select at their Internet site: <http://www.diamondselecttoys.com>



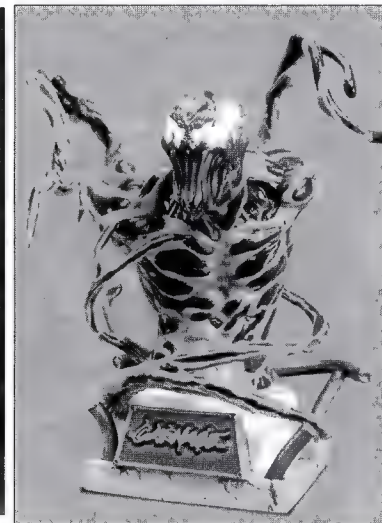
Each product shown is followed by the SRP (where known) and expected month of shipping.



Silver Age Beast 8" Statue: \$75 - Nov



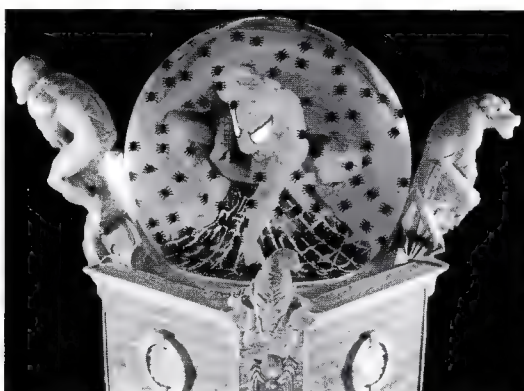
Captain America 8" Statue: \$75 - Oct



Carnage Bust: \$45 - August



Ultimate Iron Man: \$50 - Oct



Spider-Man Motion Globe: \$150 - Oct



Punisher Action Figure: \$18.99 - Oct



Keyop Unmasked: Previews Excl - Aug



Princess Unmasked: ToyFare/Tower Records Exclusive - Aug



Mark Unmasked: Electronics Boutique/Tower Records Exclusive - Aug



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• SEPTEMBER •

• **THE INTERNATIONAL MODEL & HOBBY EXPO (RCHTA):** The largest Model and Hobby Show in North America, opens exclusively for trade September 5th and 6th, 2002. The doors open to the public September 7th and 8th, 2002. There will be nearly 400 exhibitors from 38 countries stretched across 225,000 square feet. More than 50% of the distributors from this year's show were from outside the United States; this makes an important statement about the significance of this show. The show will commence at Donald E. Stephen's Convention Center in Rosemont, Illinois. For more information please contact: **Mary S. DeBaggis, msdebaggis@ihobbyexpo.com, RCHTA, 31632 North Ellis Drive, Unit 111, Volo, IL 60073, Phone: 847-740-1111, Fax: 847-740-1112.**

• **KITBUILDERS MODEL & TOY SHOW:** takes place Sunday Sept 29 2002 at the Hillside Holiday inn, hillside il. Times: 9am-4pm. admission 4 dollars, kids under 12 free. military(with ID) free. Big dealers room, Guests include Dave Cockrum(X-men, Aurora artist) and Glori ann Gilbert. Call 815-334-1540 or email bigkahuna69@hotmail.com for info.

• OCTOBER •

• **CHILLER THEATRE:** You've heard of this mega event. Twice a year. Catch it this coming **October - Sheraton Meadowlands Plaza, East Rutherford, NJ.** The walking zombies, model kits, scream queens, contests, film screenings, autograph sessions and everything else you've come to know and love will all be on hand! Call the **Chiller Hotline** at **201.457.1991** for updated show information and guest lineup. Check them out on the Internet at: <http://chillertheatre.com/>

• **If It Rolls, Floats or Flies:** presented by Herb Deeks. Model kit swap meet and related items, October 27, 2002. See the August 11th date above for details.

• NOVEMBER •

• **Cleveland Model Show 6:** The International Plastic Modeler's Society Western Reserve and John H. Glenn Chapters invite you to join them on Saturday, November 2, 2002 at Kirtland High School in Kirtland, OH. Contest with 40 regular and 5 open categories. For additional information, please contact Contest Chairman, Doug Halke, 4967 Garrett Dr., North Ridgeville, OH 44039, Tel: 440.327.0165 or E-mail: DHalke@loraincounty.net. For vendor information, contact, John Vitkus, 3323 Maynard Rd., Shaker Heights, OH 44122, Tel: 216.751.2224 or E-mail: vitkusj@aol.com

• FEBRUARY 2003 •

• **Modelfest '03:** February 16, 2003 from 8:30am to 3:00pm. Plastic model contest and swap meet to be held at the Ventura Fairgrounds/Seaside Park, 10 West Harbor Blvd. Admission: \$5.00 per person. State parking fees additional. For more information, contact: Vernon Morseman or Stuart Mackie at 805.658.8138.

• MARCH •

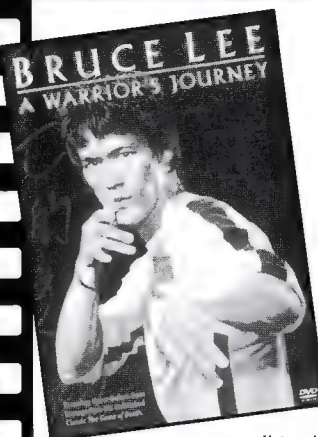
• **SCAHMS:** The California Show, Friday and Saturday, March 14 and 15 at the Doubletree Hotel, Anaheim/O.C., 100 The City Dr, Orange. Tel: 714.634.4500 (between 8am and 5pm PDT). Contact: jl776h@aol.com for more information

• MAY •

• **Drone-A-Rama:** Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, May 23 - 26, 2003, at Gateway Hotel Nottingham. Event will begin on Friday and the model show will take place on Saturday, the auction will occur on Sunday and Monday is pack-up time. Special guests are planning from the world of British TeleFantasy.

THE SIGHTS & SOUNDS OF MODELING!

with Bill Craft



BRUCE LEE A WARRIOR'S JOURNEY

Warner Home Video

For those of you who may remember Bruce Lee's unfinished film, "The Game of Death" and the awful film Columbia Pictures put together with scant footage of Lee, will certainly enjoy this release.

Uncovered at last, is the entire "end" sequence from Bruce Lee's own screenplay, complete with his own dialogue. Not that repetitive

catcall in the Columbia version. Now you can experience the entire film the way it was meant to be seen from Bruce Lee's own script notes. In narrative form, you will know just how the beginning of the film was to be seen, as well as the events that lead up to the finale that contains the 28-year-old discovered footage.

This disk is filled with all kinds of insights, not only on the film "The Game of Death," but of Bruce Lee himself.

So sit down in front of your television and transport yourself back in time for a rare treat.

My usual complaint about the Warner snap case is still present here, but I had to somehow get over it for this release. Warner's did practically nothing to promote this DVD, so I will have to do it for them.

Check it out. A must-have for Bruce Lee fans.



LEGEND

Universal

All I can say about this disk is that it is simply amazing! The world has been waiting for this release for a long time and it will not disappoint.

In addition to the American release of the film, this two-disk set contains the European version, which is considerably darker and moodier than the somewhat lighthearted American release.

The European version also contains the original Jerry Goldsmith score which was abandoned in the American version in favor of Tangerine Dream.

There is so much extra material on this DVD release, that it would take a day or so to get through it all. Director, Ridley Scott, has a commentary track that gives you insight on the film.

On its initial release, here in the United States, the film flopped. However, over the years the film has grown to cult status. To see Tom Cruise before he became a superstar and the magnificent performance of Tim Curry as Darkness, is magical in itself.

I have lost count of just how many Darkness figure kits that have been produced. A great beastie indeed!

This is another definite must-have disk! The packaging for this two-disk set is even fun.

FIRST MEN IN THE MOON

Columbia/TriStar Home Entertainment

Now this is a DVD release that I have been waiting for. Presented in awesome widescreen and digitally remastered, this is a real treat for Ray Harryhausen fans.

As far as the extras department is concerned, we have photo galleries, a dynamation featurette, theatrical trailers and more.

It is amazing to note that the film still stands up well today amidst the high tech fodder being tossed at us nowadays. So if you want to relive a truly thrilling moment in film history, then check out this DVD. You will not be disappointed.



20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH

Columbia/TriStar Home Entertainment

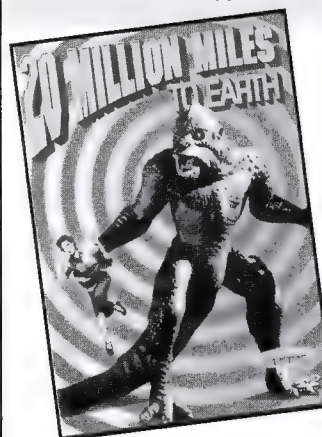
Another treat for you Harryhausen fans has been unleashed and I must say to Columbia/TriStar, that whatever you people are doing as far as remastering these films, keep up the good work. This film looks great.

Presented in full

screen as well as widescreen, the Venusian creature called the Ymir is really a sight to behold.

Extras include the original theatrical trailer as well as a Dynamation featurette.

Coming next is "Earth vs. The Flying Saucers."



SUPERCIRL

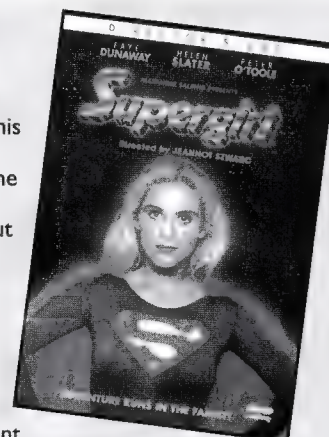
Anchor Bay

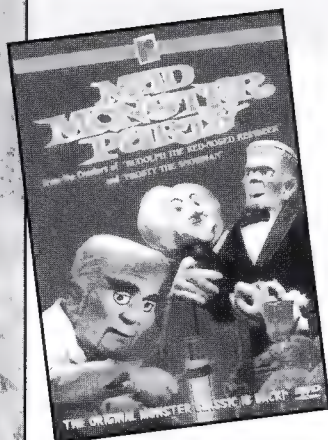
What can I say? I like this movie! Unlike the previous versions of this film with all the extras, this disk contains only the feature. The Director's cut in widescreen no less.

The Score to this film makes it truly enjoyable to watch, in my opinion.

The price on the disk was twelve bucks, so you can't go wrong here.

Helen Slater was excellent as the girl of steel. Hubba Hubba!





MAD MONSTER PARTY

Anchor Bay

Upon its initial release way back in 1967, this film was a commercial flop. Over the years it has grown into a cult film with increasing popularity.

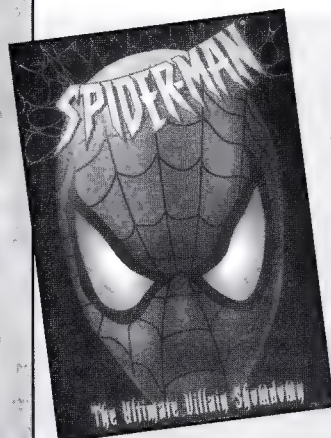
Until this DVD release, only faded and worn-out prints was the only way to watch this film.

Anchor Bay stepped up to the plate and dug up the original negatives and restored the film to its current glory.

Wonderful music and of course the great monster man himself, Boris Karloff, lends his voice to the cast.

Puppetry at its finest from the folks at Ranklin/Bass who gave us classics like, "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and "Santa Clause is Coming To Town."

Check it out! You will be glad you did.



SPIDERMAN, THE ULTIMATE VILLAIN SHOWDOWN

Buena Vista Home Entertainment

Alright now! What is this you may ask?

For all you older guys out there that still remember the original Spiderman cartoon show from the 60s, this disk contains the "Origin of Spiderman" episode, complete with the original opening theme and music score from the series.

Oh, by the way, the rest of the disk contains some of the newer animated episodes of Spidey battling villains like The Green Goblin and Dr. Octopus. Great animation and all, but I still have a nostalgic thing for the old stuff.

Where are the rest of the old episodes?

This disk is for sentimentalists only.



IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE

Universal

This is a true gem of 1950s Sci-fi. Universal did this one up right with a load of extras including a new documentary on the film as well as feature commentary, photograph and poster galleries as well as a trailer.

The film looks and sounds pretty good for its age.

The only gripe many people have about this disk is the cover art which features a flying, two-eyed, tentacled beastie. Where this came from, who knows? Some young genius over there that has no idea of what's going on, I suppose.

Other than that, have at this one and transport yourself back to the silver age of science fiction filmmaking at its finest.

Hey Universal head man! Can that designer of the cover art, why don't ya! Just kiddin.

CD CAPSULE REVIEWS

THE FLY TRILOGY

Composed by
Paul Sawtell & Bert Shefter
www.percepto.com



This is a mammoth two-cd collection that delivers all the goods. Over 60 tracks comprise the original scores to these films. Also included is a 56-page color booklet that examines not only the three films, but the composers as well.

Limited to 3000 copies, this collection of film music is a must-have for monster film score collectors.



STAR WARS EPISODE II

Composed by John Williams

Maybe I am alone on this, but this film score entry into the series is a bit tired. A lot of retread from the last film with just a hint of music from the original three films.

The film itself was definitely better than Episode I, but the score was lackluster. Buy it if you must. For collectors only.

HAMMER, THE STUDIO THAT DRIPPED BLOOD

www.fourquartersent.com

Various Composers



New recordings authorized by the original composers. 28 tracks over two disks. Also included is a 16-page booklet showcasing classic posters from the films.

Very nicely done. A must have for Hammer film fans.



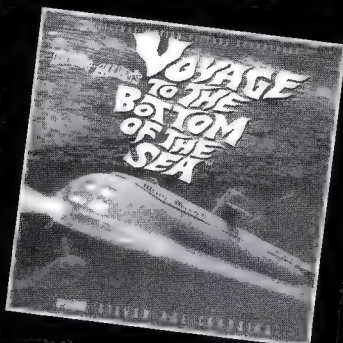
JASON X

Composed by Harry Manfredini
www.varesesarabande.com

A very entertaining score that mixes a bit of the old with some new flare. Manfredini has been doing this type of music for a long time now and is on top of his game as far as genre films of this kind are concerned.

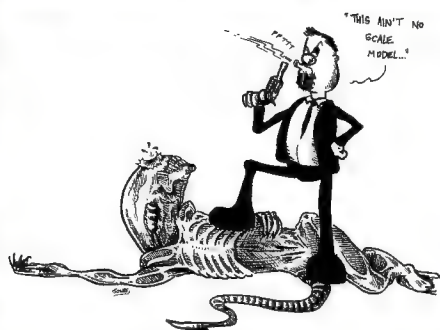
VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA

Composed by Paul Sawtell & Bert Shefter
www.filmscoremonthly.com



The score for the original motion picture has been unleashed at last. This film started the ball rolling for Irwin Allen. Almost an hour awaits the listener. A 16-page full color is also included. Good stuff.

ACROSS the POND



with Andrew "Mad Dog" Hall



**Above: Ben Marlow's Best In Show:
T-800 Arm**

**Below: Andrew Wright's
1:1 Scale Jack Bust**



Drone-A-Rama is the bi-yearly model show/convention of the Film & TV Model Club over here in God's Green and Pleasant Lane, or England for those of you who have not guessed. October 2001 was our third and biggest event spanning three days of model-related events with all the usual convention goodies: competitions, fancy dress, quizzes, role-play games, and a good excuse - if ever there was a need - for the social side of things. However, what makes our little "do" different is that on the Saturday we hold our model show.

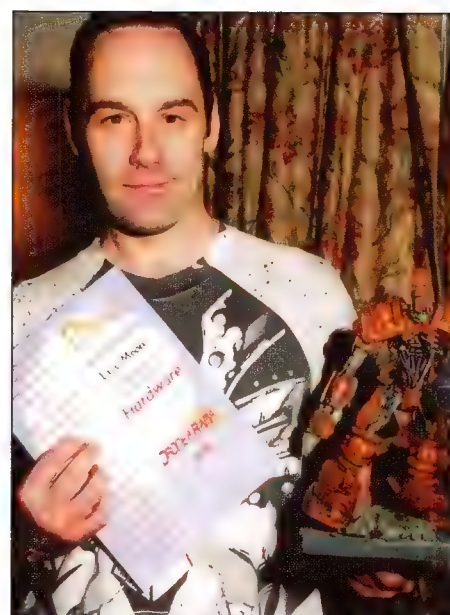
In past years the quality and amount of kits on show has been truly outstanding. However, the FTVMC members really outdid themselves for our third event with over 280 kits on show with an eye for detail not often seen together under the same roof. Having the Sunday to wander in wonder and have a good look at the entrants was a bonus for attendees. This is something we will be doing at future events, but I am jumping forward in time...oops!

Our voting system allows each member to vote in each of the set categories, i.e.: Hammer House of Horror - all kits, busts in this section must come from a Hammer movie, Star Wars Movies, etc. We have the normal sections like Hardware, Monsters, Humanoid and the like, but by having set categories, people build for those specific sections of the show. Voting was not easy as there were so many great items to choose from, but we believe it is very fair and reflects the views of the normal kit buyer and builder.

There was not only the show going on, we also had some sculpting demonstrations taking place over the weekend - the idea being five chaps would produce parts of a relief plaque which would feature a given letter. These in turn would spell out the name of our club magazine...DRONE, get the idea? Ian Marchant produced a "Bender" next to a D. Jason Brookes (although not attending did send his contribution) an R with a "Jason Friday 13th; model builder and special guest Martin J. Bower produced an O as the space station from 2001, Dave Daines had a zombie rising from the grave, the N as the tombstone, while Andrew Wright produced a superb Allen hugging the E. Fantastic. Great to see that each sculptor used a different medium to work with. Saturday also held a surprise for Dave Ballard (long time POTA fan) as he was turned into an Ape by the very talented Ian Frost.

The results of the show were given late on Saturday afternoon and they were:

- Vignette: Roy Surridge with his "Pa"; Roy is that short; it's a 2-foot high table.
- Harryhausen Tribute: Dave Trelfer and his Harpies diorama; he has cream for it.
- Only When I Larf: Gary Stratmann won with his two scratchbuilt Pod Racers inspired by the Wallace & Gromit shows.
- Role Play Figures: Mick Edge with a 25mm scale Games Workshop demon - reminds him of someone in his family.
- Land Of The Rising Yen: Won by Ben Marlow...it's a half-woman, half-bird, bit robot thing.
- Dr. One's Lab: Eric Moore won this with his interpretation of the Labs' "Drone Trooper" kit.
- Hammer Tribute: This was won by new boy, Steve Kay, with his stunning Plaque of the Zombies figure.
- Scratch Figure: Hard-fought section this one, with Dave Trelfer taking the honours with his "Ghoul."
- Star Wars: Jason Andrew's Fett on tower was a real eye-catcher and tall.
- Scratch Hardware: Another hard fought section, but the winner was Eric Moor with his reworked ABC robot holding a hair dryer...don't ask!
- Humanoid: This section was won by Mick Edge with his version of the Jack The Ripper story...again he says it reminds him of someone in his family.
- Diorama: A section for folks to go wild and no one did it better than Jo Brookes with her huge "Bride" entry.
- Family - (for wives, partners and children of club members): The winner with her Vampire diorama was Jacqui Edge who says the diorama was inspired by someone in her family...
- Busts: This section was won by Andrew Wright with his 1/1 scale "Jack" bust and yep, each hair is hand-punched.
- Monsters: A huge selection to chose from, but won by Dave Daines with his Cthulhu figure. Yes, HPL fans, a total travesty of the deep one, but what can you say?



Above from Left to Right: Dave Treifer and his "Ghoul;" Jacqui Edge and her "Vampire Coach" diorama and Eric Moore holds his "ABC War Robot."

• Scratch Hardware: Ben Marlow's T-800 arm with glass tube walked this section! Each part had been machined by hand and yes...the fingers do move as the arm is fully articulated and weighs a ton.

From all of the above, members have to pick four items: Best diorama, Best Figure, Best Hardware and Best in Show. This year the votes were all over the place; our tightest set of votes to date, but winning the coveted **Dr. One Awards** were:

- Best Diorama: Joe Brookes for her Bride display.
- Best Figure: Steve Kay with his huge FX Predator and half a garden.
- Best Hardware: Ben Marlow with his T-800 arm.
- The Best In show went to Ben for his Terminator arm - a stunning piece of work by anyone's standards.

The remainder of the weekend was one of light banter, tough quizzes, death and destruction as the Daleks invaded York. I got well and truly stitched up. We held our Charity Auction and made a respectable £680 - thanks to those who donated items for this - and generally had a good time. It's really nice to chat among folk who share an interest and you make new pals and learn at the same time. There are more reports, photos on the FTVMC's web site if you are interested.

May 2003 is our next Show/Convention, but we are relocating to the fair city of Nottingham,



so hope that even more people can attend with more goodies to view and more kits to drool over!

Andrew "Mad Dog" Hall
FTVMC

172 HIGH HOPE STREET
CROOK, COUNTY DURHAM, DL5 9JA, UK



Photo 1: Dr. One's Lab, Photo 2: Jo Brookes and her "Bride" diorama, Photo 3: Roy Surridge and his "Pa."

Directly above: Mick Edge and his "Little Demon."

Skywalking to



Recreating a Star Wars® Scene - Part One

"Mos Eisley Spaceport. You will never find a more wretched hive of scum and villainy. We must be cautious." Obi-Wan Kenobi's words to young Luke Skywalker remain as vivid to me today as they were when spoken on motion picture screens over two and a half decades ago. Although I've since constructed numerous Star Wars spaceships and dioramas, there was one classic moment from George Lucas' epic I had yet to tackle - the popular Cantina scene.

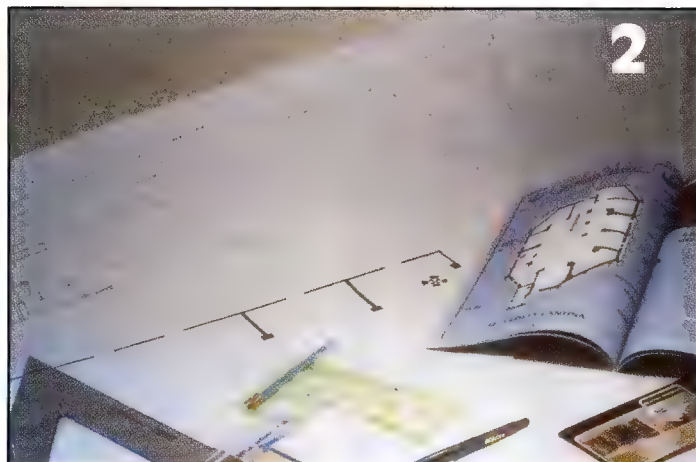
But how to do it? The Cantina was dark and complex with unique figures not available as model kits. Additionally, since the movie



scene was an enclosed building interior, it would not be effective as an "open diorama." The answer...recreate the Cantina as a box diorama!

Help me Obi-Wan

I'd built a couple box dioramas in the past, but nothing as elaborate as this project was to prove to be. Box dioramas have been called the ultimate in modeling. While that statement may be debated, it is no argument that constructing a box diorama can be the most intensive miniature project a modeler



the Cantina



attempts. Sometimes called a shadow box, a box diorama is, simply put, a diorama set into a box and viewed through an opening in one side. By doing so, the modeler manipulates the audience's point of view, angle and lighting conditions, thereby completely controlling the mood and atmosphere of the scene.

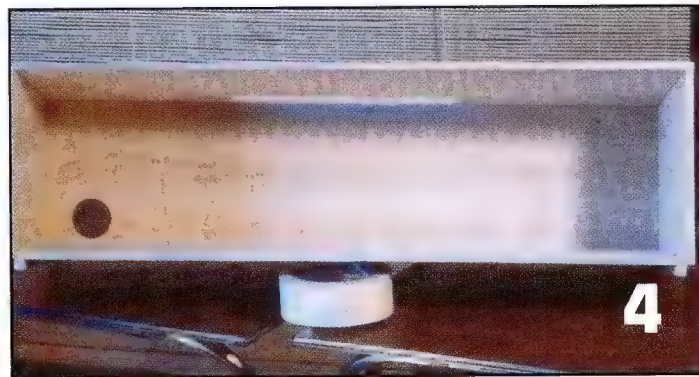
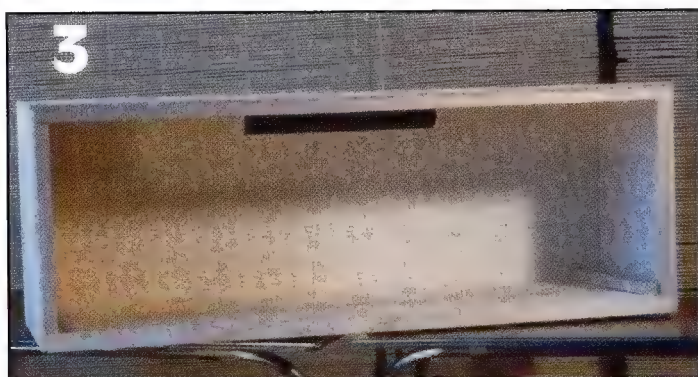
To be successful in this Herculean endeavor, research and careful planning was mandatory. I turned to experienced diorama builders Ray Anderson and Shepard Paine as spiritual guides. Both have built dozens of box dioramas and written articles and books on the subject. Ray had built box dioramas since 1972 and wrote *The Art of the Diorama* for Kalmbach Publications. Shep, world famous for his military dioramas, also covered the subject in his informative bible on diorama building, *How to Build Dioramas*, also published by Kalmbach. Like Obi-Wan was to Luke, these accomplished model builders became mentors in my project and I frequently referred to their books. But also like Skywalker, I sometimes ignored my mentors' advice and suffered the consequences.

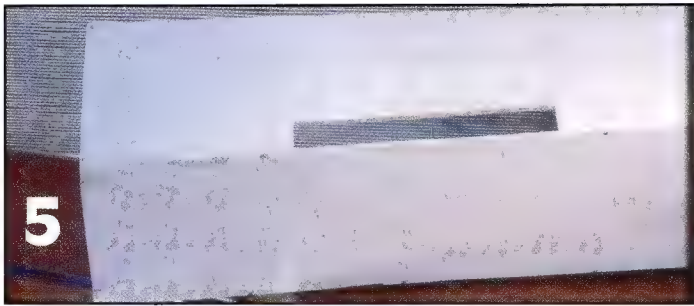
Show Me the Plans, Artoo

Often I plunge into a new project headfirst, allowing the sub-

ject to lead me to a desirable conclusion. For this miniature adventure however, that approach would have resulted in expensive errors and wasted effort. Extensive research and planning was a must do, giving me an excuse to watch and freeze frame the movie numerous times. I decided the diorama story was to revolve around the bar fight between Obi-Wan and a pair of disagreeable alien customers.

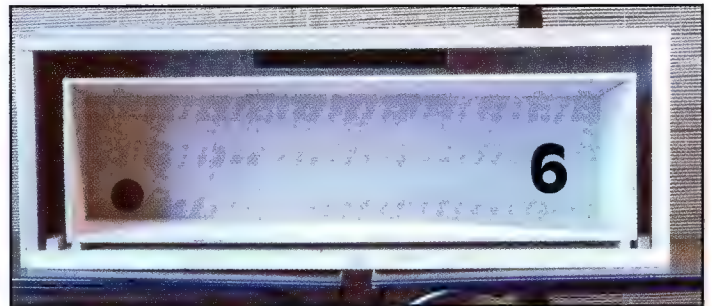
Many books and "fandom" magazines have been written about Star Wars, some which were of great help in my research (**Photo 1**). A long out of print coffee table book, *The Art of Star Wars* (Carol Titleman, Ballantine Books, 1979), was crammed with a plethora of art design drawings, including photographs of shooting sets, effects models, costumes and alien masks. Starlog Press published a three issue magazine series about the original Star Wars trilogy in 1993 that included new blueprints of the various buildings of Mos Eisley, including the Cantina floor plans. Another book, *From Star Wars to Indiana Jones - the Best of the Lucasfilm Archives* (Mark Cotta & Shinji Hata, Chronicle Books, 1994), contained more photos of the effects models and inside facts about the movie production. This last book is still available, while the other publications may be located at sci-fi





conventions held in cities throughout the world each year.

While viewing the film, I quickly sketched the Cantina interior noting placement of the bar, tables, etc. The bar clientele figures I were to use (which will be discussed in detail later) determined the diorama's scale as approximately 1:18. For practical purposes, the finished box diorama needed to be easily displayed on a bookshelf, forcing me to condense the Cantina scene, editing out anything that didn't directly support my storyline. The outside box (or case) dimensions became 29-inches long, 10-inches deep and 10-inches tall. Next, I painstakingly drew detailed plans of the interior diorama (essentially another box), allowing for ample room around this inner box to include electrical components nec-



essary to light my scene (Photo 2). wood and carefully cut out on my table saw. Precise cuts resulted in neat-fitting parts. Instead of nailing the cut wood sheets together, I used brass wood screws and Elmer's carpenter wood glue, increasing the assembled case strength (Photo 3). Because it was easier to do at this stage than later, I inserted the main inner box light fixture before continuing. Throughout construction I had to consider where the lighting components were to go. For clarity, I'll discuss the complete lighting details later on.

When designing the Cantina interior I was faced with a limited amount of space. The plans allowed my scene to be a rectangle 25-inches wide, 7-inches tall and 8-inches deep. I staged the scene action by arraigning my bar customer figures in the

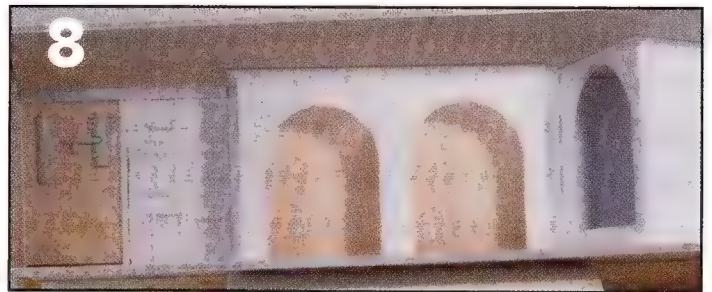


essary to light my scene (Photo 2).

Thinking Inside the Box

I've seen cases of some box dioramas designed to support the inner box story. For example, a sword and sorcery battle scene that had its case appear to be a stone from an old castle wall. For my project however, I didn't want the outside case to possibly distract from the complex story happening inside. The case was to be a simple black painted box.

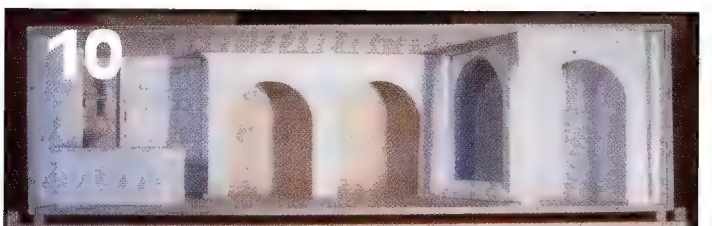
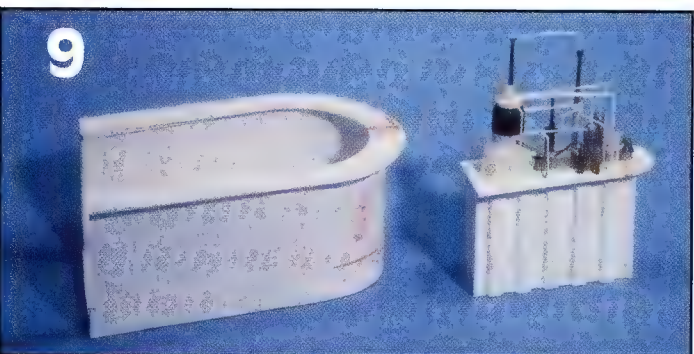
I preferred ¼-inch thick micro plywood sheet for construction of the outer shell. This material is used in building radio control model airplanes and is quite strong, yet lightweight and resistant to humidity. Measurements were transferred to each sheet of ply-

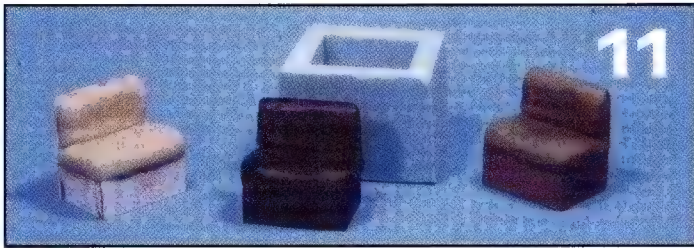


space until I got a good idea where everything was to go. To make the bar seem larger than it really was, the inner box parallel walls and ceiling were set at 10-degree angles toward the back of the box, creating a distorted perspective and enhanced the illusion of depth (Photo 4). Like the case, the inner diorama box was cut from micro plywood and assembled with screws and wood glue. Two ½-inch wood strip risers were attached to the bottom side of the inner box to allow room for electrical wiring underneath. A hole in the rear wall was cut out to accommodate a small speaker for a sound system...more on that later. Additionally, a slot in the ceiling was made where the main light fixture would shine through (Photo 5). I test-fitted the boxes together, checking that there was enough room around the inner box for later installation of the electrical components (Photo 6). So far, everything was going according to plan.

Bartender, I Would Like to Sit at a Booth

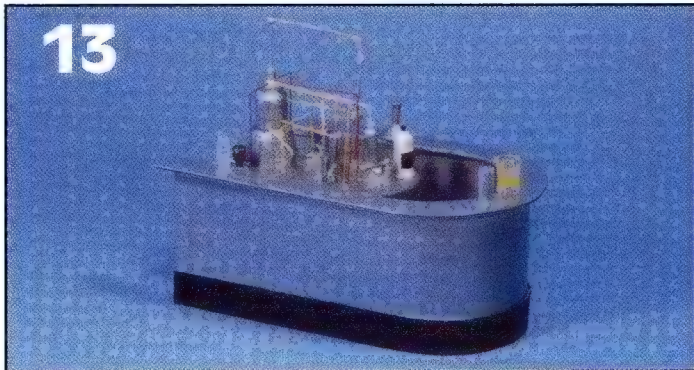
After studying the video and my research books, I noted major features of the Cantina's interior. Once again, limited space forced me to use artist license as to exact placement of the bar and seating. This diorama wasn't intended to be an architectural reproduction of the movie set.





I transferred bar wall plans to .080" and .060" Evergreen styrene sheet. Then the walls were cut out with a sharp hobby knife and ruler. The parts were assembled with liquid plastic cement and superglue (Photo 7). The film set had a curved hallway entrance that disappeared off camera. I utilized a wall of .030" styrene sheet to achieve this, curving that wall into the back of the foreground wall. This created a hallway illusion and saved space. Since the audience is restricted to viewing your scene from a specific angle, never build items that can't be seen. The backside of these walls, for example, had no details and weren't even painted later on.

The assembled walls were test-fitted into the inner box, making note of adjustments required for a snug fit. Some minor trimming of the plastic walls corrected a problem or two. A few extra wall details were scrounged from my spare parts box and added



(Photo 8). The Cantina was beginning look like my research photos!

Returning to my scrap box again, I fabricated the bar and beverage dispenser. Space limitations forced me to downscale the bar to about half the size it should have been. I accepted the compromise since the illusion was still maintained (Photo 9). The complicated dispenser was built from miscellaneous model airplane parts and heat-stretched plastic sprue. It was then test-fitted in the miniature set to check for flaws (Photo 10).

Bar seating in the real set were overstuffed, low back lounge chairs. I needed ten identical chairs, deciding to make one from sheet plastic and A+B epoxy putty, then using it for a RTV silicon mold. When cast in resin and painted, I had plenty of great bar seats (Photo 11). Much easier than scratch building each piece. Small cocktail tables with tiny lights were also required, but I'll describe them later when I cover electrical.

The full size movie set walls appeared to have a textured surface, like plaster covered adobe or stucco. I considered applying a layer of Woodland Scenics Foam Putty or Durham's Water Putty



over the plastic walls. Both of these materials can be used effectively to depict adobe. That idea was dismissed because I felt the materials wouldn't stick well to smooth styrene sheet. I opted to spray a light application of textured paint, called Flex Stone, on the walls. Brown mustard enamel was airbrushed over this, and the walls shaded with ground pastel chalks. Testors' Dullcoat was sprayed on to set the chalks and the walls were drybrushed in light shades of yellow-brown (Photo 12). Exposed Cantina walls in the inner diorama box were given the same treatment.

While the walls were drying, I proceeded to paint the bar and beverage dispenser with all of its details. I had a couple of publicity photographs and movie stills showing the bar, but it was difficult to determine the fixture's precise color scheme. Overall, Testors' Metalizer stainless steel became my choice of color, pick-



ing out the various odd gizmos and tubing in bright colored acrylics (Photo 13). After everything completely dried, I again test-fitted the bar and wall parts into the diorama box (Photo 14). It may seem I was paranoiac constantly checking the fit, but it assured everything would go together where I intended them to be.

I now added more "set decorations," which I will discuss later in part two, consisting of chairs, overhead lights and cocktail tables (Photo 15). With the first stage of this project completed, I felt reasonably confident my elaborate box diorama was progressing according to plan. In hindsight, I now realize this was the easy part. In part two, I'll relate my battle with the "dark side" of building of a box diorama when I collided head-on in a debacle with miniature lighting, a room full of bizarre actors and making it all work together. Until then, may the Force be with you!



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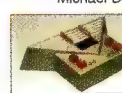
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Richard Marmo ScaleWorld August 2001

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work truly is. I've asked Martin to give us a little background on himself, his work and his studio Gore Group...check it out.

MC: First let me apologize for my Tarzanesque style English, I am 32 yrs. old a self-taught modeler since the age of 21. I started with drawings, copying from comic magazines such as Fierro, Zona 84, etc. I always loved character designs, so I based my creations in Chichoni, Altuna, Segrelles, Moebius, Gimenez and Bilal's works, among many others. But I reached a point where drawings won't allow me to do what I had in mind. That is when I began modeling with epoxy clay. The first pieces were based on designs of my own. This series of 8 figures was sold in a comic book store called Entelequia, between 1990/1991. At the same time I was doing these figures, and thanks to my friend Gustavo Melella, I got a job in FX for 2 years. In 1992 I decided to go on working by myself, modeling comic figures. This gave me the chance of showing my pieces to others. But, unfortunately, the local market was too small for making a living. In 1995 I made a contact with a toy company (Joc S.A.) and soon I started working as a freelancer for them, and at the same time I kept working on my figures. I also did many pieces for license, such as Disney and Warner Brothers. With time, the number of customers augmented, adding a new way of earning money: publicity companies. (Agulla y Bacetti, Grey Argentina, Savaglio TVWA, Hermida y Asoc. etc). Nowadays, this is my principal source of income, although I keep going on with the collectable figures modeling, trying to make my own versions of comic classics.

Toward the end of 1996, Gore Group was born - a team of freelance artists from Argentina, created by myself. We've been working in the local market under license such as Disney, Warner Bros. and Universal, just to mention a few. But it's been a relatively short time since we started working for the American market, sculpting collectable figures, making busts, dioramas and everything related to comics, anime, horror, sci-fi and fantasy. Although we started working for USA companies not long ago, we already had the opportunity to work under some important license from Top Cow, Cliffhanger and Mr. Alex Ross's project from Marvel Comics. Actually, we are taking part in a good number of Dynamic Forces projects.

MR: What impact do you want to make as a sculptor and artist in the modeling community? What is your artistic goal? Do you see yourself going beyond the GK and Modeling world?

MC: I only try. This "community" gives me a space for doing what I love most. My objective is to make figures that, when seen by others, generate something like...I WANT ONE OF THESE!!!!

I see myself anywhere I am, that lets me create things through a sculpture, garage kit, or by any other medium.



MR: *You have worked on several film projects in Argentina, correct? Do you have any plans or projects for American films?*

MC: I took part in many projects - some for movies, some for TV. Unfortunately, many of them stayed that way (projects), thanks to my country's ability to stick our faces in the mud for not being part of the tiny and selected group in charge of the national industry. About the American cinema, it's not something I consider an objective for now, and if it were, I believe it's a huge market far away from Argentina.

MR: *Describe to us if you will, your sculpting style and give us your thought process when you work on a piece.*

MC: Hmmm...my style is very dark and baroque. I'm absolutely in love with details and textures, and almost can't tolerate smooth areas in a sculpture. But, this is something I cannot do in the licensed sculpts since 90% are comic characters, although I always try to put a bit of illness in all of them. The creative process starts when they tell me I have to do a specific character. Right after that I look for images, illustrations; I get all the information available about him/her. Then I make a sketch that reflects his/her most expressive essence. All this is accompanied with lots of music, like for example: Marilyn Manson, Mano Negra, Manu Chao, Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong, Massive Attack, Oingo Boingo (Danny Elfman), Philip Glass, Cocteau Twins, Nick Cave, Tom Waits, Laurie Anderson, Portishead, etc., etc., etc.

MR: *What were some difficult projects you worked on? I have heard many artists say Disney is a real pain to work for; have you had the pleasure?*

MC: I have no doubt the most difficult projects I ever worked on were the ones made for Disney, since the representatives in Argentina have almost nothing as reference for the

making of 3D figures. That's why we had to use 2D material, exclusively made for the graphic area. And as it happens most of the time, the front and side views of the cartoon characters don't coincide.

MR: *What was the most gratifying project you ever worked on?*

MC: Well, almost all the works made for others in which I was able to reflect some of my free interpretation (read style). But it goes without saying that the best were and will be my own and independent creations.

MR: *Martin, can you tell the readers about your own model kit line you are working on?*

MC: I believe this is one of my principal objectives, to create my own line of figures where I could design beings with a history and a reason to be, legends from different worlds and time, like it happens with the Wizard and the Golem. The idea is to create a Mystic Collection genre the old man is a kind of judge and the Golem his punishment tool.

Guess for me a good way to achieve this, is to keep my position firmly, and to go on thinking and modeling my own projects in my free time while I keep working as a freelance sculptor.

Another thing that gets most of my attention is redesigning classic characters that I could represent them in my own bizarre vision. That's the case of the Joker; it is one of a four-part mini collection from the ultra popular Arkham Asylum. Of course, I would love to do these for a company, but first I should be a top league sculptor. But I think that's something beyond my reach, that's why I do it just for pleasure.

MR: *You are currently looking for a company to help produce these kits for you, is that right? We have the Joker bust featured in another article in MR. Let me tell the readers*

Continued Next Page





that it is an amazing piece, a very sick and twisted Joker! It is the finest Joker bust I have ever seen.

MC: I've just grown two hat sizes because of your kind words, thank you very much!!!

Yes, of course, this is something I am looking for since a long time, but I'm too far from where the figure market is. That's why it is almost impossible to contact with the right guy. However, I have to say that some time ago I had the chance to introduce some of my figures in the GK market, thanks to Anthony Mestas collaboration and his company Life Force Studios.

Unfortunately, our first experience was with my figure of Dark Hunter that was most welcome in the garage kit market. But it soon failed because of the recasts and the most feared thing of all the little and newborn producers of GK, that is to say the copyrights licensing, this time from DC COMICS.

I still have pending with Anthony the launch of a line of ashtrays sculpted and designed by me, named "Soul Rippers," but to tell you the truth, this is taking too long (2 years approximately), so I'm thinking it must be getting really difficult for him to get a good place inside the market. More than enough to realize the idea of my own line of GK is impossible from where I am now.

MR: Martin, unlike most industry sculptors who use Super Sculpey, you sculpt with Aves Apoxy Sculpt. Tell us about Aves, why is it your preferred medium?

MC: Let me tell you something: I use Super Sculpey too for doing most of the freelance works, and this is obviously because of its great advantage. You don't have to work against time since it never hardens, and you can show it as it is to the client for approvals or corrections. But I would rather use Aves® Apoxy when I do my own figures, because it's much more easier than Super Sculpey for doing all kind of textures and forms. Also, if you plan to have a durable original, Aves is far more resistant and stronger than Sculpey. In fact, my first experiences in modeling were with epoxy clay, and since then I keep using it. This was 11 years ago. In comparison, Super Sculpey is new for me. I just knew of its existence only two years ago.



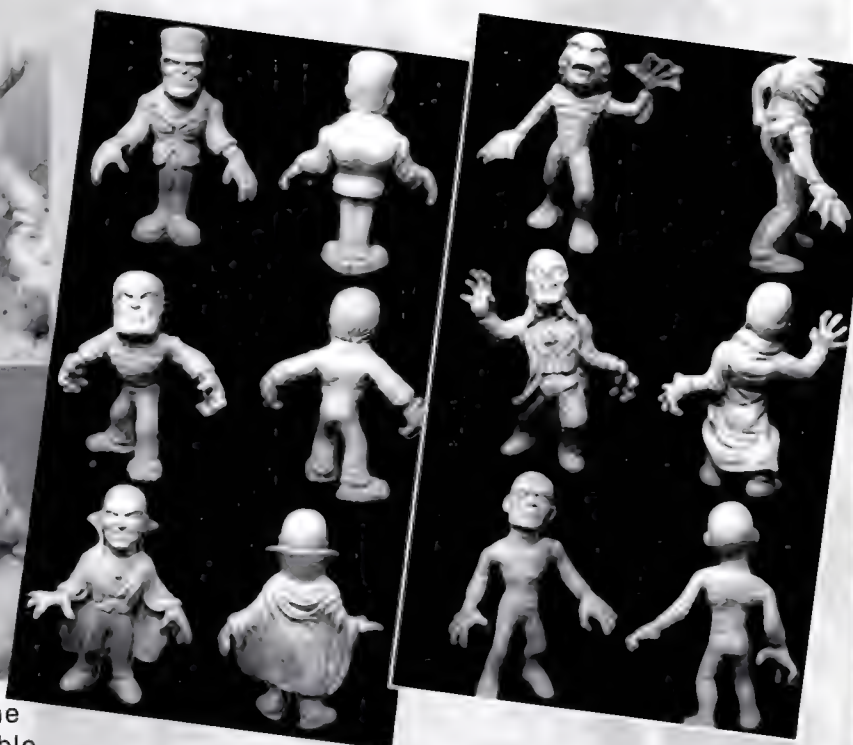
MR: Martin, you achieve so much detail in your work. Your Old Wizard has incredible details; it is mind blowing. How long does it take you to finish a piece like this?

MC: Well, it's a bit hard to be precise since I do it in my free time, but if I could be full time with it, I believe it would take me about two weeks of work.

MR: Tell us about your studio Gore Group? How many sculptors are in your studio and do you all work on the same projects?

MC: Gore Group started slowly. Until 1996 I worked alone, independently, that's when





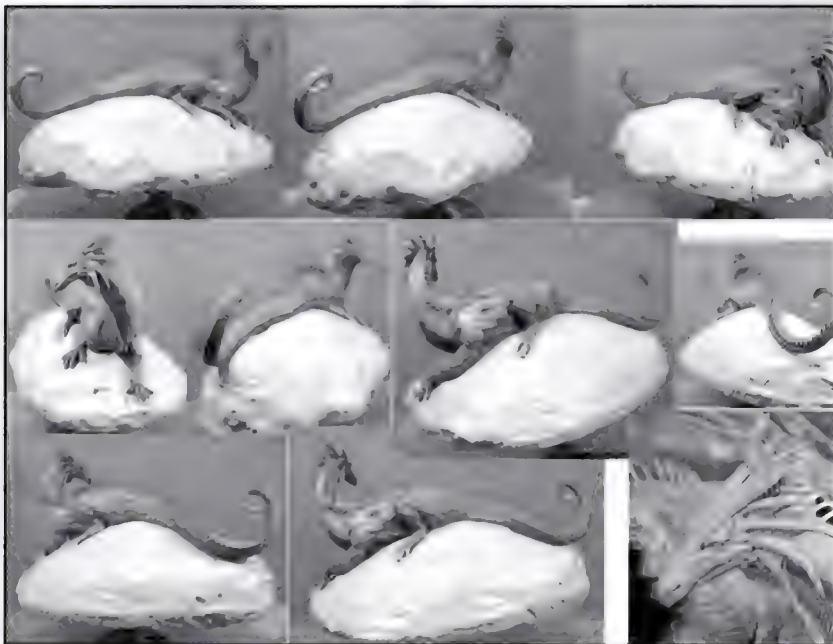
Pablo Viggiano appeared. In those days, he used to draw as a hobby in his free time. Pablo came to me cause a friend of mine saw his work and thought it would be a good idea for us to meet each other. And that's how it was; he came and showed me his drawings (they were very good, most of all considering he never studied art) but I didn't know if he could be of any help by then. What really caught my attention was his way of representing volume in his paintings, so I decided to teach him modeling. Obviously, in very little time he got used to it, and at the same time I got a new client. This client gave me so much work I couldn't handle it alone. That's when Pablo left his job and we started working together.

Nowadays we are partners and we complement perfectly in the making of figures for other companies. A few years passed and I decided it

was time to look clients outside Argentina since our market was getting more and more little, so I decided it was time to show our stuff in USA. In July 2000 we went together to San Diego Comic Con and my head exploded in a hundred pieces there. I couldn't believe what my eyes were seeing there. In the expo I met many who I believed (and I still do) were the monsters of modelism, only seen before in magazines such as MR, Hobby Japan, AFM, amongst others. I'm talking of Takayuki Takeya and Yasushi Nirasawa, with whom I could even talk, although I couldn't make good use of the meeting cause my English was (and still is) basic Tarzanesque, and his was initial Tarzanesque. Even in this frustrated intention of dialogue, I gave him as a present one of my

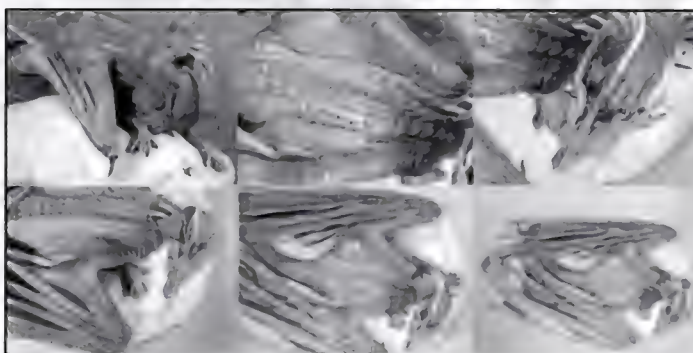
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Left and Below: A highly detailed dragon. Above right: Martin Canale, Osvaldo Canale (Martin's Father), Pablo Viggiano (Partner) and Rodolfo Laborde (Public Relations & Mold Maker).

most beloved originals for being my inspiration. (I still believe he never knew that was an original and what it represented to me.) Of course, in this expo there were some other guys I didn't know, but I remembered their names from the credits of some of Bowen's busts and



Moore's figures, ... I'm talking about the Shiflett Brothers, two guys that demonstrated they were not only names in the credits of excellent figures, but also great people, always available when a recommendation was needed.

But the fact of working for the United States is something I owe to two great persons to whom I am completely grateful: Carlos Meglia (creator of Cyber Six) and Humberto Ramos (creator of Crimson).

MR: Have you considered moving from Argentina to America or perhaps some other country?

MC: No, I never thought about it, although I always wanted to work for the North American market, but I thought of the possibility of moving to Europe, -more precisely Spain- since we share the same blood and social uses, and obviously the language. In fact, there are many chances of moving Gore Group to Spain in mid-2003. Although the European market is not as large as the one from USA, it's starting to gain strength. On the other hand, there is a very good market of American and European comic figures in France. Needless to say, I want to keep working for those

American companies interested in our services.

MR: Where do you see yourself artistically five years from now?

MC: If, I'm still in this country, only God knows...

MR: Who has influenced you in sculpting and art?

MC: About the people that my work was influenced under or by...well, these are the people who have written my influence Bible:

SCULPTING GODS:

Takayuki Takeya, Yasushi Nirasawa, Yusuke Takayanagi.

SCULPTING MASTERS:

Shiflett Brothers, William Paquet, Paul Komoda, Clayburn Moore, Randy Bowen,.....Definitively someone that should not to lack in my best list is ANGELA TALBOT; she is simply glorious!!!!

DRAWING:

FRAZETTA, BISLEY, BROM, McKEAN, JUAN BOBILLO, FREZZATO, MOEBIUS, BILAL, NINE, MEGLIA...

MR: I want to express my gratitude to Martin for giving our readers a chance to get to know him and also for sharing with us some of his latest sculpting creations! I like to say that as far as

being a Top League sculptor Martin, you are already there. I believe in the future your name will be right up there next to the top in the industry. We look forward to seeing more wonderful and unique sculptures from Gore Group Studios.

MC: Well, I most appreciate Fred for his time and the space he gave me in the magazine and for being interested in my work. Thank you!

Martin and Palbo's Dynamic Forces Sculpting Credits:

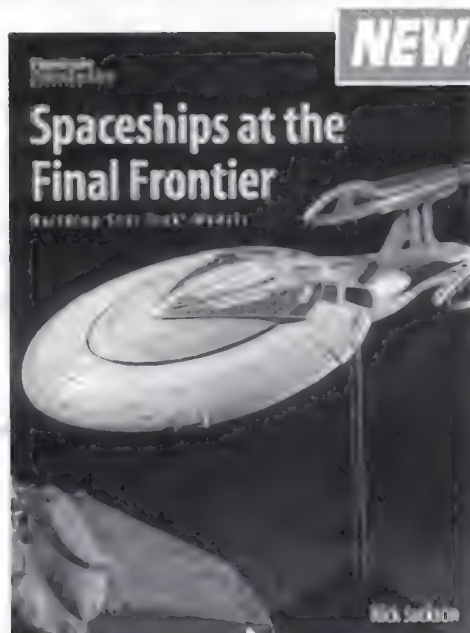
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ORIGIN (8 inches BUST)
MARTHA WASHINGTON (5 inches BUST).
BLADE (5 inches BUST)
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WEAPON-X (8 inches BUST)

Gore Group Staff:

- Sculpture/Design:
Martin Canale (Founder & Creative Director)
Pablo Viggiano (Partner)
- Drawing/Turn Arounds:
Juan Bobillo
Pablo Viggiano
- Mold-making Department:
Osvaldo Canale
Rodolfo Laborde
- Public relations:
Rodolfo Laborde
- Clean Casting Department:
Alejandro Cabano
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- Master Chef:
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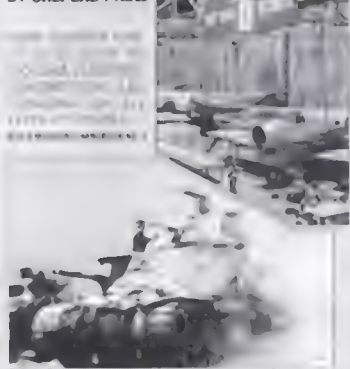


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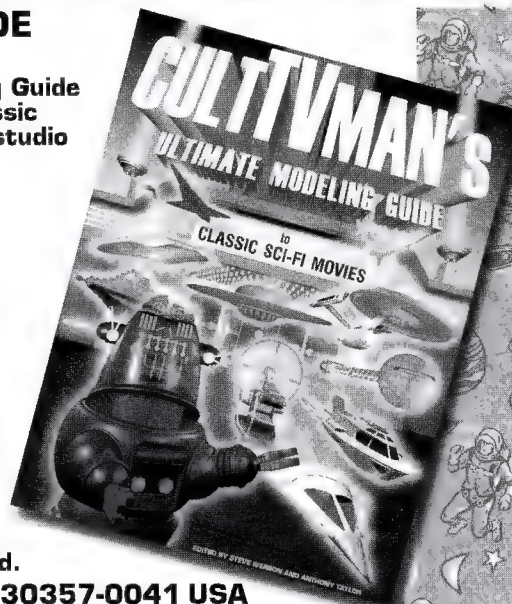
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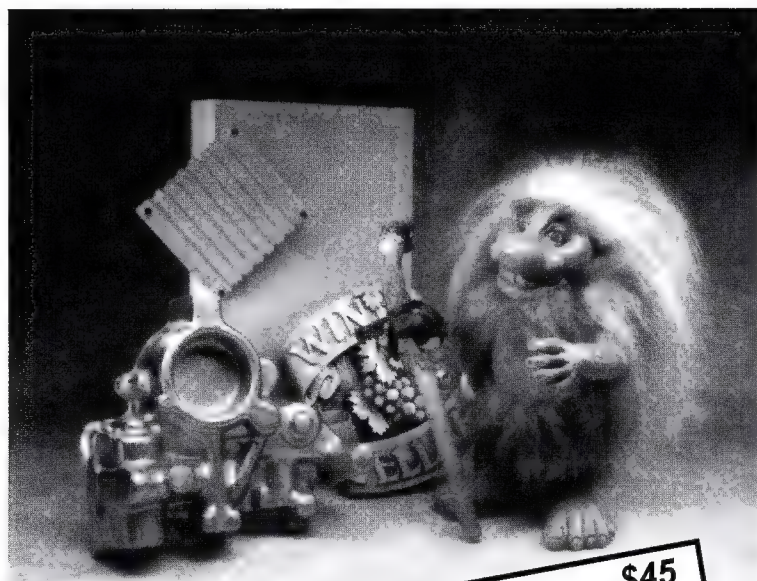
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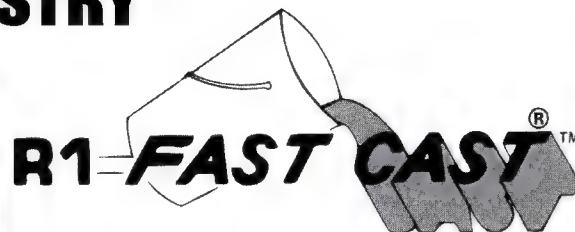


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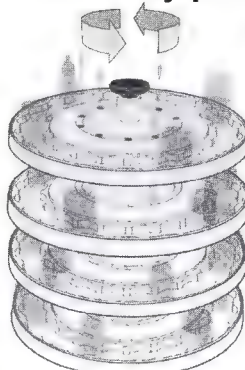
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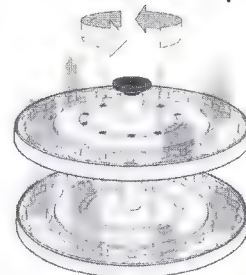
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it. If you're not getting body language, which is the biggest key to a lot of it, the piece won't work. You can do a very boring guy if you've got a nice stance for him. And if you've got a nice stance and you can put a lot of detail into it, you can't go wrong at that point."

This thought naturally leads to the question of whether Todd has considered a line of model kits to complement the already extensive collection of action figures he's created. "I was talking about it, even if it's just as simple as making some of the toys unpainted and letting people come up with their own paint schemes and tricks and techniques. Especially some of the bigger toys, the twelve-inch and eighteen-inch toys, we've talked about making a hundred or two hundred of them unpainted and sell those to the modelers. And let them do their own blood splatters."

"The only thing that has prevented us so far is just a matter of getting enough numbers and placement into the spots to be able to do it. We have a system that's built and we've talked about models to some of our accounts and they're not all that

excited about the idea. They like the ten-dollar and eight-dollar item; they like to keep the prices reasonable. They tell us for model kits we'll give you this kind of order. There's a certain limitation unfortunately. We'll have to go to places that will endorse us, not places who are trying to figure out how not to buy them."

Like most of us, Todd shares a common influence from his childhood, especially when it comes to designing some of his more elaborate bases and dioramas for the action figure lines. "The dioramas harken back to my Aurora model days and so does the way we paint them. Early on I was trying to convince the factory that I don't want them to look like brand new toys, I want them to look like statues or model kits. When I built model kits like the werewolf, you'd put a little bit of blood on him and a little bit of mud on him because he was tromping around in the fields. You were able to texture it a little bit with the paint, which in hindsight I'm sure was horrible, you had your forty bottles of Testors and you did what you could with them. Why can't the models be articulated, I guess is what I was always looking for."

The Aurora influence is what carried Todd into the toy business and it seems that many other toy manufacturers felt that same influence when designing and creating their own action figure lines. It's just that they didn't follow through with it in the same manner as McFarlane Toys. "I know it's true because when I went to the Toy Fairs in New York and saw the manufacturers' prototypes that were absolutely stunning and then you see the end result and you want to know what did they do? They had twenty colors on the prototype and the final is just blue plastic, it was so discouraging. We had to set up a little area in our booth to show people, this is the 'two-up', this is the prototype, this is the toy in the package, notice how it looks exactly the same, but smaller. There are slight variations, but it's ninety eight percent accurate. Because whenever I was telling people, 'It's going to look like this.' They'd say, 'Yeah sure, kid. We've been hearing that for forty years.' They wouldn't believe it until the product came out and we'd show them we could do it. Now they come around and they know, when they show our prototype to their clients--that's what it's going to look like. They now understand that I'm not trying to trick them. What you see is what you'll get; only copied down a little smaller. The other guys, I believe, used to bring in professional model builders to juice up all their prototypes with airbrushing and other effects. So if they did it there, why not do it on the product when it came out. I figured it out...it was all about cost. But it seemed like false advertising to me, if they were going to do airbrushing on the prototype, they should do airbrushing at the factory. So, one of the things that is key to us isn't the detail because the detail doesn't cost one extra penny other than the sculptor's time. In the mold making, steel doesn't give a crap what shape it's in - it has no thought process. You want its final product to be round and smooth, done. You want it to be bumpy with a thousand rivets, done. It doesn't cost any more, it's still the same chunk of steel. So the lack of detail, to me, was unforgivable because it doesn't cost anything more to manufacture it. What does cost is when you have a thousand rivets, do you want to paint them. If you want to paint them, then the cost comes in. So what they would think is if we put in the rivets, the customer will notice if we don't paint them, so let's not put them there so they won't know we didn't paint them. What they did was take two steps out in order to save one, which was a moneymaker. Where my thinking is 'that thing with three rivets looks bare to me, make it a dozen rivets and paint every one of them.' And the production people come back with 'Well, Todd, that's going to cost you money.' 'That's not what I said, I said paint every damn one of them. I didn't say I wouldn't pay my bill. Send me the bill.' I'm less concerned about the price because I'll price a product so it looks like a fair price to the consumer. This is what stunned me other manufacturers would say, 'We have to make our toys \$4.99 or \$5.99.'



Then they found out later, if we do some of the Todd stuff and it costs us an extra twenty cents, we can up charge a buck! We actually make more money! They didn't figure out that math equation until later. 'We can stiff the consumer by just doing a little bit extra. That's cool!' Why do you think Star Wars toys cost so much now?"

Often, a line of McFarlane toys will feature a figure so outrageously large and detailed that it almost shocks consumers that it is priced the same as the other figures in the line. Todd calls them "mondo" figures and tries to include them in nearly every line of figures he does and they always move out of the stores. The current Ultima Online: Lord Blackthorn's Revenge series contains both an armored Juggernaut figure and a huge dragon, called an Ancient Wurm that go far beyond the bounds of a normal action figure. "The mondo guys always sell. No matter how bad you do a mondo guy they always sell. Why? Because people are figuring, 'You get that much plastic or that much plastic?' It's all about the plastic at that point. 'Why do I want a female when I can buy a damn big plastic Martian guy?' We've never had a 'peg warmer' in one of those big plastic guys."

As for new projects, McFarlane Toys is always developing and designing more new lines that Todd feels are geared toward the well-rounded fans who are the readers of Modeler's Resource. "We're still going for the ideas and subject matter that will appeal to your fan base. I think that model makers are the same demographics that I have, between fifteen and forty and a vast majority of them male. I think we all like the same stuff. I've got some toys coming out next year. We're going to upgrade the Monsters and just get wackier with it. Then there's a new Tortured Souls like that's kookier than the first one. The second line, the emphasis is on Torture. Then we've got a couple of big movies, good movies, not kid movies. The studios came to me as the guy who could do them right. We'll be putting out stuff that people can have fun with and we'll be adding little extra things to enhance the modeling side of it."

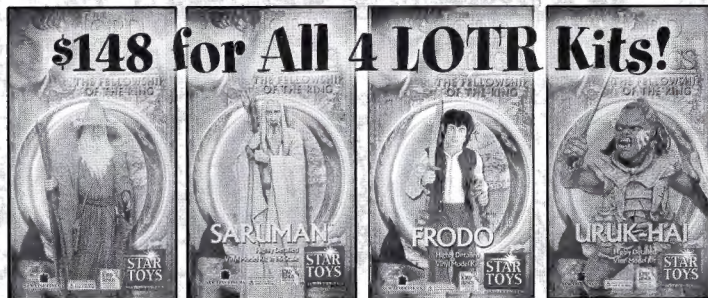
Above all else, Todd is a realist as well as a canny businessman. He's cautiously optimistic about the growth of interest in action figures in general, but he knows that continued customer support will depend upon creating an interesting product for a demanding audience. "I don't know that it will grow by leaps and bounds; I think the action figure business is ruled by the same kinds of rules and regulations as any other business. With supply and demand, if there's enough good product out there at a good price that people are interested in, you'll have a lot of customers. If it's sort of boring, uninteresting material and the price is a little spendy, people will put their money in a place where they'll get more value for it. I don't control those other companies, I don't know what they'll be doing in the future, but for us I think our company as an isolated event is going to grow. I know what we're doing. I don't know if that spills into a ton of new customers or if I'll get any of the people who are buying Harry Potter toys as customers. I know that our base, especially as we diversify into TV, Video Games, Monsters and Sports, which is a huge growth area for us, will continue to expand. The sports figures are something we can put out en masse and not offend anyone and unlike a movie license, there's always a new 'hot' guy in sports. It's like getting a new star every year there's another three or four new guys where you say, 'Cool, we've got to do that guy now.'"

When it comes to picking a favorite toy or line, Todd looks at that task with a realistic eye as well. "Each line has a different task to accomplish. With movie stuff you want to get the likeness of the actors and actresses. That's the biggest task, making it believable. In sports you want to catch that frozen moment so it looks like game action and you want them to look like they've been playing a while. With monsters you want to be sure to do enough texturing and tricks on it so it seems kind of gooey and macabre. When we're done with something like Tortured Souls, our goal was to have something people would look at and be startled. I think we accomplished it. That's a different task than when we set out to do football players. I have different toys and individual figures and sometimes lines that I like for completely different reasons than other ones."

It is difficult to say exactly what McFarlane Toys will come up with in the future, but it will most certainly be well crafted, exciting and above all else surprising. If a demand is created, perhaps we'll even see model kits coming from McFarlane and kits that are crafted on the same level as McFarlane toys would be a joy for modelers worldwide. To have a look at what's new from McFarlane Toys, visit Spawn.com.



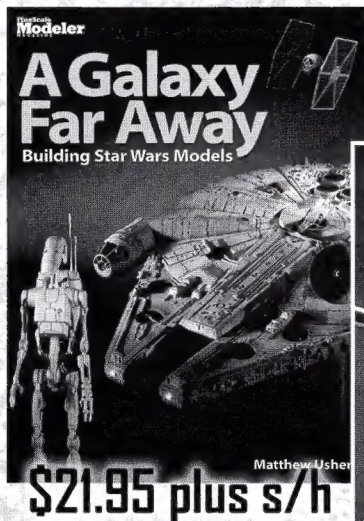
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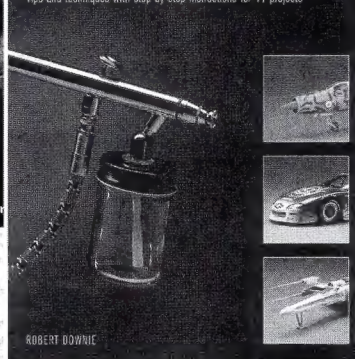


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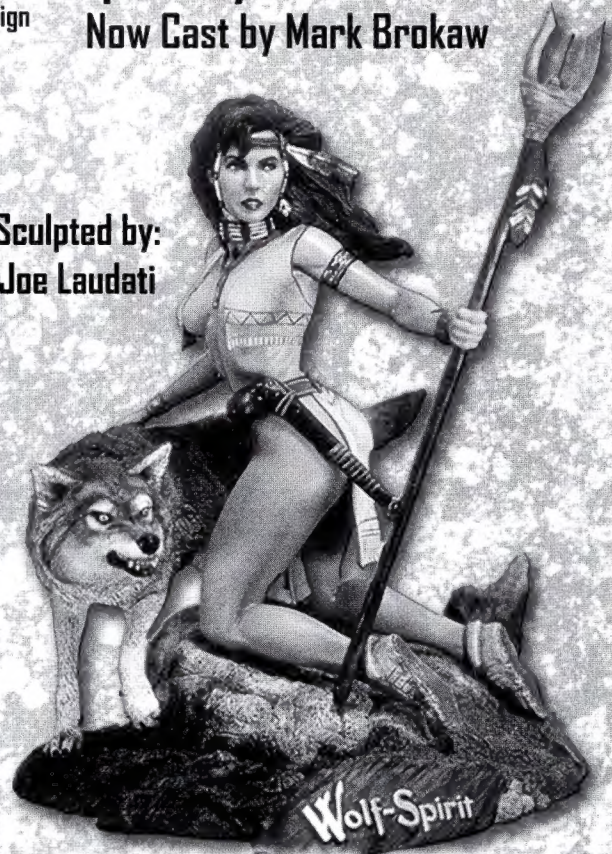


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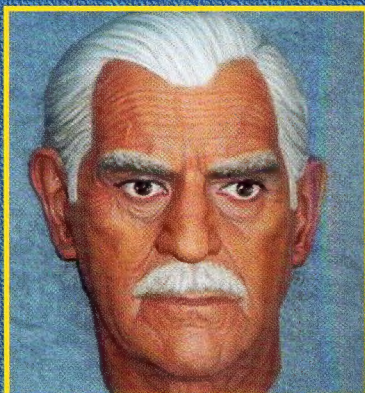


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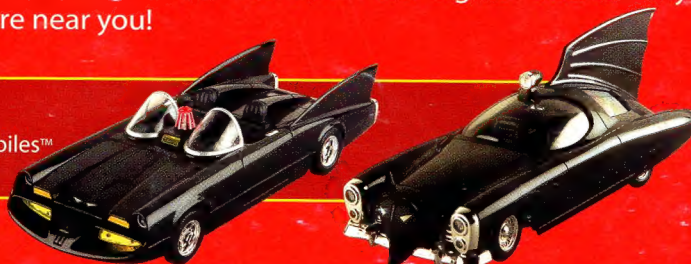
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